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The Lakeside Classics

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John Long's  
Voyages and Travels  
in the Years 1768-1788

EDITED WITH  
HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY  
MILO MILTON QUAIFE

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WITH MAP



The Lakeside Press, Chicago  
R. R. DONNELLEY & SONS COMPANY  
CHRISTMAS, MCMXXII



## Publishers' Preface

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THE selection of material for the *Lake-side Classics* is growing increasingly difficult each year. The book must be sufficiently rare to justify its reprinting, and it must contain a human interest which will make it read and prized for its intrinsic merit. Many a time the publishers have wished that they might have foreseen to what, unconsciously, they had committed themselves, and how the row of these little books was to grow from year to year on the shelves of their friends. Some consistent program for subject matter would certainly have been adopted, and the interest in the general plan would have excused the dullness of some particular volume. But without any such plan, each volume must stand on its own feet, and a particularly happy selection one year establishes the necessity of an equally happy one for its successor; and each year we shift the responsibility to Mr. Quaife, to discover from his wide knowledge of early American history, another rare publication that will measure up to the established standard.

Again, for this year's volume, we turn to the north country, the early fur trade, and Indian adventure. John Long's experiences

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## Publishers' Preface

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and narrative are somewhat similar to Henry's narrative of last year. But Henry was always the white man carrying himself through by his white man's intelligence and force of character, while Long, living in his youth among the Indians as an Indian, acquired a knowledge of their language, customs, and psychology, which intuitively told him in critical situations just when to cajole and when to be bold.

Both narratives are full of the thrills of the dime novels of our boyhood days, but with a directness of statement that carries conviction even to our advancing years. If the story of John Long adds an hour or so of real pleasure during this Christmas season to the friends of The Lakeside Press, its reprinting will accomplish the hopes of

THE PUBLISHERS.

Christmas, 1922.



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# Historical Introduction



## Historical Introduction

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A YEAR ago in the *Lakeside Classics* series was published the personal narrative of Alexander Henry, who embarked in the Northwest fur-trade immediately following the English Conquest of Canada, and for sixteen years thereafter passed his life in the wilderness, at first around the shores of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior, and later in the far Northwest.

This year, in presenting the *Voyages and Travels* of John Long, we return to much the same scene of activities in a slightly later period. Long was a native of England who came out to Canada in the year 1768, in the capacity of articled clerk to a merchant of Montreal. The all-absorbing business of Montreal in this period was the Indian trade, and Long's career in the New World was thus fixed in advance of his migration to it. His course of training for the arduous duties of the new and strange employment is described by our author himself in the opening chapters of his narrative.

Of the first seven years of Long's sojourn in America the journal tells but little. Then, in the spring of 1775, two events occurred which shaped the further course of the narrative. The one was the expiration of Long's seven-

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year term of apprenticeship to his employer; the other, the outbreak of the American Revolution. Long was "naturally of a roving disposition," and he had just completed an arduous schooling in the arts of savage and wilderness life. The rebellious American colonists expected as a matter of course to enroll the ancient French colony to the northward in their ranks, and expeditions to this end were among the earliest military enterprises of the Americans in the Revolutionary War.

Canada had need of defenders, therefore, and training and personal inclination alike combined to induce Long to put himself at the head of an Indian raiding party for irregular service in the Royal cause. From the viewpoint of the American colonists the occupation upon which our author thus entered was the most detestable known to man. Generations of frontier contests had imbued them with a horror of Indian warfare which seared their very souls. "The horrors of savage belligerence," wrote the townsmen of Detroit in December, 1811, appealing to the government for protection, "description cannot paint. No picture can resemble the reality. No effort can bring the imagination up to the standard of fact. Nor sex, nor age, have claims. The short remnant of life left to the hoary head, trembling with age and infirmities, is snatched away. The tenderest infant, yet imbibing nutrition from the mammilla of maternal love,

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and the agonized mother herself, alike await the stroke of the relentless tomahawk. No vestige is left of what fire can consume. Nothing that breathes the breath of life is spared. The animals reared by the care of civilized man are involved in his destruction. No human foresight can divine the quarter which shall be struck. It is in the dead of the night, in the darkness of the moon, in the howling of the storm, that the demoniac deed is done."

Perchance the time will come, with the passing of the decades, when an American reader can sit calmly down to the perusal of the rape of Louvain or the exploits of a submarine captain in the Great War. In such a state of detachment the American of today may peruse the story of Long's partisan warfare against his forbears. Although our author writes with apparent candor, making no effort to conceal his genuine liking for the service in which he was engaged, he either took no part in raids upon the American settlements or else he has seen fit to refrain from reciting such exploits.

After two years of service in the war, chiefly in the capacity of ranger serving with Indian war-parties, our author embarked upon the Northwest fur-trade, going out to Mackinac in the spring of 1777. Six months earlier Alexander Henry had returned to Montreal, concluding thereby his sixteen-year period of service in the trade of the interior upon which Long was just embarking. From Mackinac

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our author was sent into the Lake Superior district, being assigned to the forbidding region around Lake Nipigon and extending indefinitely northward and westward.

Of the manner of life in this region, where Long spent two seasons, his own words afford a plain, yet eloquent, picture. Perusing them, one cannot but agree that something other than the paltry salary received must have animated the spirits of men to induce them to face and endure such hardships.

At the close of his second season in the Lake Nipigon country, Long returned to Mackinac and there joined the combined British and Indian expedition to Prairie du Chien, sent out in the spring of 1780 to carry off the stock of furs which the traders had accumulated there, in advance of an expected attack by the Americans. Thus, for a brief space of time, our author comes once more within the circle of warlike activities, and this, too, at an interesting period of the Revolution in the West. Spain had declared war upon Great Britain in 1779, and with this new enemy to face the British authorities proceeded to develop a comprehensive plan of operations for the year 1780 which should sweep the whole western American frontier from Canada to Florida and effect the overthrow of the power both of Spain and the rebellious colonists in the valley of the Mississippi. From Pensacola in the South and Detroit in the Northwest armies



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were to be launched in a converging attack upon New Orleans, the northern force being expected to capture St. Louis, the Spanish capital of Upper Louisiana, en route.

This far-reaching program, the execution of which might well have sealed the doom of the entire American cause, was frustrated largely through the energetic course of Governor-general Galvez of New Orleans, who assumed the aggressive against the foe and in two seasons of campaigning cleared the British out of the Southwest, capturing Pensacola in May, 1781. The northern end of the British campaign of 1780 met with like disaster. With the aid of Matchekewis, who had massacred the British garrison at Mackinac in 1763, and other zealous partisans, a motley force of 1000 men was assembled at Prairie du Chien at the end of April for the descent of the great river to New Orleans. Before St. Louis it was to be joined by another party, which Langlade was to gather at Chicago and lead down the Illinois; while the combined operation was to be covered by still another army, led from Detroit by Captain Henry Bird, which was to descend the Wabash against General Clark at the falls of the Ohio, where now is the metropolis of Kentucky.

On May 26 the Wisconsin contingent appeared before St. Louis and began an assault upon the town. Driven off by the vigorous defense of the Spaniards, they ravaged the country-side adjoining the town and beat a

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retreat up river, their haste accelerated, probably, by the opportune appearance of their redoubtable foeman, George Rogers Clark, at Cahokia, across the river from St. Louis. Clark took no part in the battle, however, nor in the resulting pursuit, for the arrival of news of Bird's expedition against his headquarters on the Ohio caused him hastily to return to the defense of that place. He left instructions for Colonel Montgomery, however, to follow and harass the British force, and that officer advanced northward as far as Peoria and Rock River, ravaging the hostile Indian towns as he advanced.

Particularly in Indian warfare was rumor wont to magnify actuality, and the retreating British forces carried back to Mackinac and Detroit exaggerated reports of the numbers and movements of the pursuing Americans. The consequent expectation of their appearance at Prairie du Chien, in the heart of the British-Indian country, was responsible for the expedition which Long joined and of which he has given us our only detailed account.

It succeeded in its object of preventing the furs from falling into American hands, but for Long personally the result was disappointment. Deprived of his expected remuneration, he returned in the autumn of 1780 penniless to Montreal, leaving forever the western country to which he had devoted three years of strenuous endeavor.

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At Montreal Long found that his old employer had died, and under the necessity of earning a living he engaged with a merchant of Quebec to go again among the Indians in charge of a trading outfit.

This time he proceeded to the mouth of the Saguenay River, and ascending to Lake St. John, passed onward across the "divide" into a country which still, after the lapse of almost a century and a half, is largely unknown. The winter's trade was productive of satisfaction to Long's employers, but it brought little of permanent profit to the trader himself. Long seems, indeed, from his own recital of the facts, to have belonged to that numerous band of individuals who are capable of working well under competent direction, but who are totally unable to get on in business for themselves. Upon the vicissitudes of our author's later career it is unnecessary here to dwell, further than to note the fact that in the autumn of 1788, after twenty years spent in the New World he returned penniless to the land of his birth.

Of Long's life we know but little other than the pages of his own narrative reveal. This was published in London in 1791, in a handsome volume of 300 pages, with a respectable list of subscribers and dedicated, like Henry's book, to Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society. It seems to have been favorably received by the public, and was quickly

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translated into French and German. A second French edition appeared in 1810, and in 1904 the work was reprinted by Reuben G. Thwaites as Volume II of his series of *Early Western Travels*.

Dr. Thwaites, who was an eminent specialist in the field of early western history, placed a high estimate on Long's narrative. "His literary style," says the editor, "while discursive, is simple, and as clear as running water. What he wishes to say he says plainly, leaving the reader as a rule to draw his own conclusions. There is an unflinching directness in his statements, conveying to the reader the impression that he is concealing nothing, doing naught for effect, but telling a straightforward story of travels and adventures. The book forms a contribution of note to this important class of literature, and will always be readable."

From this high estimate of Long's work the editor of the present edition does not, in the main, dissent. Yet the study of the book has given rise to an impression which, while not susceptible of demonstration, seems worthy to be called to the attention of the reader. Penniless Long came home to England, and his twenty years' residence in America together with the manner of his life there must have rendered him peculiarly unfitted for the task of earning a living. He had, however, a story to tell, and the recent success of Jonathan

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Carver's *Travels* must have suggested to his mind the possibility of securing an income by publishing his own story. The careful reader of the narrative he produced will be struck by its extreme discursiveness. Simple, sincere, and straightforward the author evidently is. There is no attempt to conceal, or gloss over his failures, and although he has an evident pride in his Chippewa vocabulary, this is fairly matched by the quite unnecessary degree of modesty and self-deprecation which attends the recital of his geographical discoveries.

How are we to account for the discursiveness which characterizes, and to a degree mars, the narrative? Reference to the much-discussed book of Captain Carver suggests the answer. That volume consists of two distinct parts. Approximately one-fourth of it is devoted to Carver's personal journal of his travels; the remaining three-fourths to a treatise on the manners and customs of the Indian tribes of North America. Although Carver is professedly the author of the entire work, historical critics have shown that this second part is largely a compilation from earlier and for the most part well-known books on the subject of which it treats. Apparently, in the case of both Carver and Long the exigencies of book-making and marketing demanded a larger book than the simple journal of the traveler supplied. The solution of the problem in Carver's case we have already stated; in the

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case of Long the opposite method is followed of interjecting the matter descriptive of savage life and customs into the midst of his personal narrative. So extensively is this done that no heading can be devised sufficiently inclusive to advertise the contents of the chapter to which it is appended. In the original edition, practically no attempt was made to do this; several of the chapter captions conclude with "etc.," while others list a large variety of topics in the vain effort to include them all.

An interesting question arises at this point. Did Long himself prepare the completed narrative in the form in which it was published? Or was his personal narrative turned over to some professional writer to expand to the proportions desired for the forthcoming book? Our existing information does not permit an answer, nor is it, from the historical viewpoint, of much importance. The portions of the story which are not based on Long's experiences and observations are confessedly of second-hand authority, and it is not very material whether Long or someone else performed the task of culling them from the works that are cited. It may be noticed in passing, however, that here is no question of plagiarism, as in the much-mooted case of Carver's *Travels*, for Long is commonly careful to state the source of his information, citing definitely in the course of the book no less than seventeen authorities.

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It will perhaps be evident from the foregoing that the present edition of the work is in no sense a facsimile of the original. As in previous volumes of the Lakeside Classics, I have conceived it to be my function as editor to bring the present-day reader as close to the author himself as circumstances permit. It is quite improbable that Long was responsible for the punctuation, typography, etc., of the first edition, these details being determined as a matter of course by the publishers. So, too, in the present volume the editor is responsible for the typography, punctuation, chapter and running heads, table of contents, and index. In some cases, too, the spelling has been modernized, and some evident misprints in the original edition have been corrected. The map and title page are engraved from photographic reproductions made from the 1791 edition of the work.

MILO M. QUAIFFÉ.

Madison, Wisconsin.





VOYAGES AND TRAVELS  
OF AN  
INDIAN INTERPRETER AND TRADER,  
DESCRIBING  
*The Manners and Customs*  
OF THE  
NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS;  
WITH  
*AN ACCOUNT OF THE POSTS*  
SITUATED ON  
THE RIVER SAINT LAURENCE, LAKE ONTARIO, &c.  
TO WHICH IS ADDED,  
A VOCABULARY  
OF  
The Chippeway Language.  
*Names of Furs and Skins, in English and French.*  
A LIST OF WORDS  
IN THE  
IROQUOIS, MOHEGAN, SHAWANEE, AND ESQUIMEAUX TONGUES,  
AND A TABLE, SHEWING  
*The Analogy between the Algonkin and Chippeway Languages.*

BY J. LONG.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR; AND SOLD BY ROBSON, BOND-STREET; DEBRETT,  
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LORS, HOLBORN, LONDON; FLETCHER, OXFORD; AND BULL, BATH.

M,DCC,XCI.



## Preface to the Original Edition

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THE reader will naturally expect some account of this work.

With regard to the historical part, I have endeavored to explain the situation of the posts which, by Mr. Oswald's Treaty,<sup>1</sup> were stipulated to be surrendered to the Americans, and pointed out their convenience to Great Britain in a political and commercial point of view. I have also given a description of the Five and Six Nation Indians, and endeavored to show the usefulness, as well as necessity, of a strict alliance with them as long as we retain any possessions in Canada.

With respect to the descriptions of lakes, rivers, etc., which lie beyond Lake Superior, from Lake Nipigon to Lake Arbitibis, I have given them as accurately as possible, either from my own knowledge or the most authentic Indian accounts; and when it is considered that interpreters in the commercial line seldom have occasion for any geographical knowledge, the want of better information will be excused.

<sup>1</sup>The Treaty of Paris of 1783, which formally terminated the Revolutionary War.

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## Original Preface

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The vocabulary which is subjoined,<sup>2</sup> and on which I have bestowed some pains, it is hoped will not only afford information to such as may be desirous of attaining a knowledge of the Chippewa language, but prove useful to those who are already engaged in traffic with the Indians.

As the mode of spelling a language which has never been reduced to a grammatical system must be arbitrary, and principally depend on the ear, I have endeavored to use such letters as best agree with the English pronunciation, avoiding a multiplicity of consonants, which only perplex: and to enable the reader to speak so as to be understood by the natives, it is necessary to observe that *a* is generally sounded broad, and *e* final never pronounced but in monosyllables.

The following are the motives which induced me to make the vocabulary in the Chippewa language so copious:

In the first place it is, strictly speaking, one of the mother tongues of North America, and universally spoken in council by the chiefs who reside about the Great Lakes, to the westward of the banks of the Mississippi, as far south as the Ohio, and as far north as Hudson Bay; notwithstanding many of the tribes,

<sup>2</sup> The extensive Indian vocabulary which Long provided as an appendix to his work bears no relation to the narrative journal, and it is therefore omitted from the present edition of the work.

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## Original Preface.

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within the space of territory I have described, speak in common a different language. This observation is confirmed by authors of established repute, and further proved by the concurrent testimony of the Indian interpreters.

Baron de Lahontan<sup>3</sup> asserts that the Algonkin is a mother tongue, and that it is in as much estimation in North America as Greek and Latin in Europe: this being admitted, I am persuaded the Chippewa language possesses as much, if not greater merit, as it is in every respect better understood by the Northwest Indians. But as the knowledge of both may not only be useful, but necessary, I have given a comparative table of about two hundred and sixty words in both tongues, that the reader may use either as he shall find it best understood by the tribes with whom he may have occasion to trade; though he will find, in a variety of instances, a perfect accordance.

The table of words in the Muhhekaneew, or Mohegan, and Shawnee tongues, are extracted

<sup>3</sup> Baron de Lahontan was a French officer who spent the ten years from 1683 to 1693 in New France. Returning to his native land, he published in 1703 a readable and vivacious account of his travels in America, which obtained widespread popularity. Although long regarded as an authoritative work, it later became evident that Lahontan, like Father Hennepin, did not in fact visit some of the country he claimed to have explored, and the work fell into disrepute among scholars. Lahontan's fiction of a non-existent Long River in modern Minnesota, which he claimed to have ascended, long disfigured the maps of this region.

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## Original Preface

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from the Rev. Mr. Edwards' publication,<sup>4</sup> and are inserted to show their analogy with the Chippewa language; and as he observes that the language of the Delawares in Pennsylvania, of the Penobscots on the borders of Nova Scotia, of the Indians of St. Francis, in Canada, of the Shawnees on the Ohio, and many other tribes of savages radically agree, I judged the tables of analogy would not be unacceptable.

In the course of the historical part, several speeches in the Chippewa language are introduced, and at the end of the vocabulary a number of familiar phrases, which not only serve to show the mode of speech, but give a better idea of the language than single words.

The numeral *payshik*, or *one*, is frequently used to express the articles *a* and *the*; and *woke* is the general word for the plural number, though not always used.

Mr. Carver's vocabulary<sup>5</sup> will, in many instances, be found to differ from the Chippewa;

<sup>4</sup> The allusion is to the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, the famous New England preacher and scholar.

<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Carver was a native of Connecticut who came west to Mackinac in 1776, and from there made a journey into Minnesota and the Lake Superior region. Returning, he went to England, where he published a book of *Travels* in 1778 and died in utmost poverty two years later. The book proved widely popular, and went through numerous editions, but like Lahontan's narrative, serious question has arisen concerning its reliability. To the present editor, the first part of Carver's book, devoted to the narrative journal of his

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## Original Preface

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but when it is considered that though he calls it the Chippewa vocabulary, on page 414 of his work he says, "The Chippewa, or Algonkin," which evidently proves that he believes them the same language:—but with regard to the usefulness of the tongue, there is a perfect corroboration of sentiment; for he remarks that the Chippewa tongue appears to be the most prevailing of all the Indian languages.

It may not be amiss to observe that the Chippewa tongue as spoken by the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company is somewhat different, though not essentially so, and is called by them the Home-Guard language.

With regard to the Iroquois, or Mohawk tongue, which is peculiar to the Five and Six Nation Indians, it is not necessary in the fur trade beyond Michilimackinac; and if it were, there are not wanting printed authorities sufficient to instruct. This consideration has induced me to give only the numerals, and a few words in the language.

I have not anything further to add, but a sincere wish that my labors may prove useful to the world; and that whatever defects may be found in the following work, the public will

travels, seems worthy of credit. The second part on the manners and customs of the Indian tribes is clearly a compilation from earlier and in the main unacknowledged sources. It is greatly to Carver's credit that he foresaw, and in eloquent language foretold, the greatness of the upper Mississippi Valley as the seat of a future English civilization.

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## Original Preface

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look on them with candor, and will recollect that they are perusing, not the pages of a professed tourist, but such observations as a commercial man flatters himself may be found acceptable to the merchant and the philosopher.



John Long's  
Voyages and Travels



## Chapter 1

### REMOVAL TO AMERICA

HAVING engaged myself at an early period of life to go to North America, in the quality of an articled clerk, I left Gravesend on the tenth of April, 1768 on board the *Canada*, Captain Smith, bound to Quebec and Montreal. We had a pleasant voyage till we reached the coast of America, when the weather proving unfavorable, we were obliged to put into Newfoundland, where we stayed fourteen days. Nothing remarkable occurred here, except that a party went on shore to hunt, and one of them, Mr. Jordan, who was a passenger bound to Montreal, finding himself much fatigued, remained in the woods. The rest returned on board in the evening, anxiously expecting their companion; but after four days' painful solicitude, not being able to obtain any intelligence of him, we gave up all hopes of seeing him again; and as the snow was deep on the ground and the wild animals numerous, we supposed him to be either frozen to death or devoured by the beasts. Just as the Captain proposed setting sail an Indian came on board, to whom we endeavored to communicate our distress. On this occasion he seemed to understand us, and made signs of his inten-

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tion to go in search of him; and being furnished with some rum by way of encouragement, he got into his canoe and paddled ashore. The Captain, with great humanity, deferred prosecuting the voyage for some time: but the Indian not returning, we left Newfoundland, and after a tedious passage of near eleven weeks, arrived at Quebec, the capital of Canada.

When the Spaniards (who first discovered this northern clime) sailed past Cape Rosiers at the entrance of the River St. Lawrence, the mountains now called the Mountains of Notre Dame were covered with snow. Such a prospect, in the summer season, gave them a very unfavorable opinion of the country, and they were deterred from going up the river, supposing the land to be too barren to recompense their labors at present, or afford any future advantages; and the same impressions induced them to call it *Capo di Nada*, or Cape Nothing, by which name it is described in their charts, and from whence, by corruption of language, it has derived its present name of Canada.<sup>6</sup>

The River St. Lawrence takes its rise from Lake Nipissing, northeast of Lake Superior, about the distance of 2,000 miles from

<sup>6</sup>The real origin of the word *Canada* is involved in uncertainty and dispute. The version here presented serves to call attention to the extensive early explorations and claims of the Spaniards along the Atlantic coast of North America.

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## Voyages and Travels

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Quebec.<sup>7</sup> The breadth of it is 90 miles at the entrance, and it is navigable nearly 500 miles from the sea.

The Isle of Orleans, which is but a small distance from the city, is a beautiful spot of ground, about twenty miles in length and six in breadth. The fertility of the soil makes it a useful and valuable garden, insomuch that it supplies the capital with vegetables and grain in great abundance. The opposite village of Beauport also charms the eye, and very much heightens the scene, which is rich, romantic, and magnificent.

The Fall of Montmorenci particularly attracted my notice, as it is perhaps the most pleasing natural cascade in the world; and though its height and width are not to be compared in point of awful grandeur with the stupendous cataract of Niagara, it is sufficiently wonderful to show the power of the great Architect of the Universe, and its effects are more pleasing than the latter; for while it produces wonder and pleasure in the highest degree, it does not strike the beholder with such tremendous ideas.

As our ship was bound to Montreal as well as Quebec, and I was under the Captain's care

<sup>7</sup>The St. Lawrence, of course, takes its rise in the Great Lakes, whose remotest source may perhaps be logically regarded as the source of the river. Apparently Long chose to regard Lake Nipissing, which lies to the northeast of Lake Huron, as the source of the St. Lawrence.

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and direction, he did not allow me to go on shore at the latter place; but in a few days, to my great joy, we arrived safe at Montreal, the place of our last destination.

Montreal, formerly called Ville Marie, has nothing remarkable in it at present. It was formerly famous for a great fair, which lasted near three months, and was resorted to by the Indians, who came from the distance of many hundreds of miles to barter their peltry for English goods.<sup>8</sup> It will give pleasure to the reader to be informed that we received here the agreeable intelligence that Mr. Jordan was found in the woods, two days after our departure from Newfoundland, though with the loss of his feet, occasioned by the severity of the weather; he went afterwards in a vessel to Trois Rivières, where he settled in an iron foundry.

Trois Rivières is so called from the junction of three currents which empty themselves into the River St. Lawrence. About a league from the town there is an iron foundry, which was erected by private persons in the year 1737 and

<sup>8</sup>In the early period of the fur trade the Northwestern Indians annually made the long pilgrimage to Montreal there to barter their furs for the goods of the Frenchmen. This was the "great fair" to which our author alludes. Before long, however, the competition of the Dutch and English for the Indian trade compelled the French traders to carry their goods to the Indians and the visits of the picturesque cavalcades of the latter to Montreal ceased.

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## Voyages and Travels

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afterward ceded to the King. At first cannon and mortars were cast there, but it is now principally used in the manufacture of stoves and kettles. The ore is taken at a small distance from the works. A river runs down from the foundry into the River St. Lawrence, which enables the proprietors to send their manufactures round the country in boats on very moderate terms.

This town, which is half way between Quebec and Montreal, had formerly a very considerable trade in peltry and was the second mart in Canada; but in process of time the inhabitants of Montreal contrived to draw almost all the fur trade to themselves; and though the residents in Trois Rivières live by their commerce with the savages, and the manufacturing of birch canoes, yet the town has lost that rank and consequence which it formerly maintained; nevertheless, the advantage of the iron foundry makes them some amends, and they live, upon the whole, as happy as any people in Canada. The inhabitants of Trois Rivières were formerly very much incommoded with fleas, which swarmed in great quantities, and which, Baron de Lahontan humorously observes, occasioned an inconvenient quickness in conversation.

On my arrival at Montreal I was placed under the care of a very respectable merchant to learn the Indian trade, which is the chief support of the town. I soon acquired the

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## John Long

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names of every article of commerce in the Iroquois and French languages, and being at once prepossessed in favor of the savages, improved daily in their tongue, to the satisfaction of my employer, who approving my assiduity, and wishing me to be completely qualified in the Mohawk language to enable me to traffic with the Indians in his absence, sent me to a village called Cahnuaga, or Cock-nawaga,<sup>9</sup> situated about nine miles from Montreal, on the south side of the River St. Lawrence, where I lived with a chief whose name was *Assenegethter* until I was sufficiently instructed in the language, and then returned to my master's store to improve myself in French, which is not only universally spoken in Canada, but is absolutely necessary in the commercial intercourse with the natives, and without which it would be impossible to enjoy the society of the most respectable families, who are in general ignorant of the English language.

<sup>9</sup>Usually spelled *Coughnawaga*. An account of it is given by Long in the succeeding chapter. Eleazer Williams, the Wisconsin missionary preacher, who, about the middle of the nineteenth century, attracted widespread interest through his claim to be the famous "lost dauphin" of France, the son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, was a mixed-blood Indian belonging to this village.



## Chapter 2

### THE VILLAGE OF CAUGHNAWAGA

THE savages of this nation, who are called the praying Indians, from the circumstance of their chiefs wearing crucifixes and going through the streets of Montreal with their beads, begging alms, separated long since from the Mohawk and River Indians, and for a considerable time after their separation carried on an illicit trade between Albany and Montreal. The village contains about 200 houses, which though they are chiefly built of stone, have a mean and dirty appearance. The inhabitants amount to about 800 and (what is contrary to the general observation on the population of the Indians) are continually increasing. It is considered as the most respectable of all the Indian villages, and the people are in a great degree civilized and industrious. They sow corn, and do not depend like other nations solely upon hunting for support; but at the same time, they are not fond of laborious work, conceiving it only suited to those who are less free, and retaining so much of their primeval valor and independence as to annex the idea of slavery to every domestic employment. Their hunting grounds are within the United States, at a considerable distance from

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the village, round Fort George, Ticonderoga and Crown Point, where they kill beaver and deer, but not in such great abundance at present as they did formerly, the country being better inhabited, and the wild animals, from the present state of population, being obliged to seek a more distant and secure retreat. The skins they obtain are generally brought down to Montreal, and either sold for money or bartered for goods. It is not improbable that in a few years there will not be many good hunters among them, as they are extravagantly fond of dress, and that too of the most expensive kind. Their fondness for this luxury, which the profits arising from the lands they let out to the Canadians enable them to indulge, contributes to make them more idle; and in proportion as their vanity increases, ease and indolence are the more eagerly courted and gratified, insomuch that hunting is in danger of being totally abandoned. Their religion is Catholic, and they have a French priest or, as the Chippewa Indians term it, *The Master of Life's Man*, who instructs them and performs divine service in the Iroquois tongue. Their devotion impressed my mind too powerfully to suffer it to pass unnoticed, and induces me to observe that great praise is due to their pastors, who by unwearied assiduity and their own exemplary lives and conversation, have converted a savage race of beings from Heathenism to Christianity, and

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by uniformity of conduct continue to preserve both their religion and themselves in the esteem of their converts; an example worthy of imitation, and amounting to an incontrovertible proof that Nature in her most degenerate state may be reclaimed by those who are sincere in their endeavors, gentle in their manners, and consistent in the general tenor of their behavior. And it is to be expected, and certainly most ardently to be wished, that the savage temper among them may in time be more effectually subdued, their natural impetuosity softened and restrained, and their minds weaned from their unhappy attachment to the use of strong liquors, their indulgence in which is frequently attended with the most melancholy and fatal consequences.

## Chapter 3

### CONCERNING THE IROQUOIS OR FIVE NATIONS INDIANS

I SHALL now give a particular account of the Indians of the Five and Six Nations, and the reasons why they are so called, in order to enable the reader to form an idea of their consequence in a political point of view, as well as their importance on account of the fur trade; because the vicinity of the American territories, from Georgia to New England, gives the United States a great command and influence from their situation, and renders them more to be dreaded than even the French were in the zenith of their American power, when it was universally known they had such an interest among the savages as induced them to call the French their fathers, and of which so much yet remains as to prompt them to retain a predilection in favor of the traders of the Gallic race who are settled among them.

In 1603, when the French settled in Canada, part of the Five Nations resided on the island of Montreal, and were at war with the Adirondacks (who lived on the Ottawa, or Grand River leading to Michilimackinac); these considered the Five Nations as very insignificant opponents and incapable of serious revenge,

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and they were held in as much derision as the Delawares, who were usually called old women, or the Shawnees (who lived on the Wabash River), who were obliged to wear petticoats for a considerable time, in contempt of their want of courage and as a badge of their pusillanimity and degradation. But as no people can bear the imputation of cowardice or effeminacy as a national character, the chiefs determined to rouse their young men, and stimulate them to retrieve, or establish, a reputation; and inspiring them with heroic notions, led them to war against the Satanas, or Shaounons, whom they subdued with great ease. This success revived their drooping spirits, and forgetting how often they had been defeated by the Adirondacks [they] commenced hostilities against them, and availing themselves of the mean opinion their enemies entertained of their valor, gained the victory in several actions, and at last carried on a successful war against them even in their own country, obliging their former conquerors to abandon their native land and seek refuge on the spot where Quebec is now situated.

Soon after the French arrived and had settled at Quebec, they formed an alliance with the Adirondacks against the Five Nations. The first engagement proved decisive in favor of the Adirondacks, owing entirely to the use of firearms having been introduced among them by their new allies, which the Indians of

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the Five Nations had never before seen. This alliance, and the consequent defeat, was far from subduing or disheartening the Five Nations, but rather seemed to inspire them with additional ardor, and what they were deficient in military skill and suitable weapons they supplied by stratagem and courage. Although the French gained several advantages over them in the course of more than fifteen years, they at length were glad to bring the contest to a conclusion by making a peace with them.

This shows that the savages of the Five Nations are not easily to be conquered, and proves the necessity of preserving them in our interest as long as we shall deem it expedient, from policy, to keep possession of Canada. This being admitted, it is certain that no method will more effectually conduce to that end than retaining such barriers in our hands as will enable us to afford them protection, and supply them with arms and ammunition and other necessities in time of danger.

The Indians who lie to the north of Philadelphia, between the province of Pennsylvania and the Lakes, consist of three distinct leagues, of which the Senecas, Mohawks, and Onondagas, who are called the fathers, compose the first; the Oneidas, Cayugas, Tuscaroras, Conoys, and Nanticokes, which are one tribe, compose the second, and these two leagues constitute what is called the Six Nations. The third

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league is formed of the Wanamis, Chihokockis, or Delawares, the Mawhiccons, Munseys, and Wapingers, to which may be added the Mingoes. The Cowetas, or Creek Indians, are also united in friendship with them.

Mr. Colden says<sup>10</sup> the nations who are jointed together by a league or confederacy, like the United Provinces of Holland, are known by the names of Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas; that each of these nations is again divided into three tribes or families, who are distinguished by the names of the Tortoise, Bear, and Wolf; and that the Tuscaroras, after the war they had with the people of Carolina, fled to the Five Nations and incorporated with them, so that in fact they now consist of six, although they still retain the name of the Five Nations.<sup>11</sup> This union is of such long duration as to leave little or no traces of its origin.

Baron Lahontan observes that the Iroquois are in reality but one nation, divided into five districts; and which he distinguishes in the following manner: The Tsonontouans, the Goyogans, the Onontagues, the Oneyouts, and

<sup>10</sup> Cadwallader Colden of New York was the author of a *History of the Five Indian Nations* (New York, 1727), from which Long drew much of the data for the present chapter.

<sup>11</sup> The Tuscarora tribe migrated northward and joined the Iroquois confederacy at the close of Queen Anne's War, some three-quarters of a century before Long's narrative was written.

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the Agnies, who were all settled about thirty leagues from each other, near the great Lake Frontenac, now called Ontario.

The Mohawks, or Maquas, are the most war-like among the Five Nations and consist of nearly seven hundred warriors. They are called by the French, Agnies, or Annies, and were originally settled on the French or Grand River, leading to Michilimackinac, from whence they afterwards removed to the Mohawk River, near Schenectady, about sixteen miles from Albany, in the state of New York. Since the war in 1757 they have separated, and part of the nation is settled on the Grand River, near Niagara, and the rest at the back of the bay of Quenty, or Kenty, about forty-eight miles above Cataraqui, the capital of the Loyalist settlements<sup>12</sup> on the River St. Lawrence.

Cataraqui, or Fort Frontenac, is built near to the place where Lake Ontario discharges itself into the River St. Lawrence. It was erected by Le Comte de Frontenac, governor general of Canada, to stop the incursions of the Iroquois, and divert the channel of the

<sup>12</sup> At the close of the American Revolution many thousand Tories, or Loyalists, were either forcibly expelled from the colonies or deemed it desirable to expatriate themselves. Large numbers of them went into the Canadian wilds and laid the foundation of the province of Upper Canada. Their descendants subsequently bore an important part in the War of 1812 against the United States.



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commerce in peltry which that people carried on with the inhabitants of New York, and which they bartered for with the savages by merchandise, at a cheaper rate than the French could supply them.

This fort was at first built of wood and turf, and surrounded with high pickets, but during the mission of Father Hennepin, it was faced with stone, by the direction of the Sieur Cavelier de la Salle, and enlarged to a circuit of more than 700 yards. The basin in which it stands is capable of holding a number of vessels of considerable burden. There is a small garrison at present, and a commanding officer, to examine all boats which pass either to the new settlements or the upper posts.

The Oneidas, or Oneyouts, the Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, or Tsonontouans, and the Tuscaroras, who live with the Oneidas and Onondagas, are settled about thirty leagues distant from each other, and none of them exceeding 250 miles from the Mohawk River. All these nations express peace by the metaphor of a tree, whose top they say will reach the sun, and whose branches extend far abroad, not only that they may be seen at a great distance, but to afford them shelter and repose.

The Five Nations claim all the country south of the River St. Lawrence to the Ohio, and down the Ohio to the Wabash, which lies to the westward of the state of Pennsylvania,

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near to the borders of Virginia; westerly, to the Lakes Ontario and Erie and the River Miami, and the eastern boundaries of Lake Champlain, and the United States.

The firmness of this league, the great extent of land it claims, the number of great warriors it produces, and the undaunted courage and skill which distinguish the members of it in their contests both with the savages and European nations, all conspire to prove the good policy of an alliance with them; as it is an undoubted fact that in case of a dispute with the Americans, the posts would make but a feeble resistance without their exertions; and deprived of the forts, the fur trade would soon be lost to this country.

I shall next consider the situation and utility of these barriers in a commercial point of view, and endeavor to show the propriety of keeping possession of the posts, notwithstanding by the treaty of peace with the United States they were expressly stipulated to be given up; although it is not probable indeed that the Americans will be able to fulfill the treaty on their part; so as to entitle them to make a reasonable demand—I mean such a claim as Government must absolutely admit.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The treaty of 1783 had provided, among other things, that the British would surrender, with all convenient speed, the several military posts held by them within the borders of the newly-established United States. The fur trade was the dominant commercial interest of Canada, however, and the traders appre-

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The first post I shall notice is Oswegatche, on the River St. Lawrence, about 150 miles above Montreal, at the mouth of the Black River, where there are about an hundred savages, who occasionally frequent it, and are called Oswegatche Indians, although they belong to the tribes of the Five Nations. To this fort the inhabitants of New England may with ease transport goods to supply the Mohawks, Cahnuagas, Connecadagas, St. Regis, and some straggling Messesawger Indians, who live near the Detroit, at a smaller expense than they can possibly be obtained from the merchants at Quebec or Montreal, but particularly rum, which is now become an essential requisite in every transaction with the savages; for, though they used formerly often to complain of the introduction of strong water by the traders (as appears by the language of their chiefs in council) to the prejudice of their young men, yet they have not now the resolution to refrain from the use of it; on the contrary, it is become so familiar, and even necessary to them, that a drunken frolic is

hended, as Long here argues, that the surrender of the posts would enable the American traders to wrest the control of the fur trade from Canada. Pretexts were found for retaining the posts, and out of this and other issues at dispute between the two countries matters were rapidly drifting toward a renewal of the war. This catastrophe was averted by the Jay treaty of 1794, and the posts were surrendered to the United States two years later.

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looked upon as an indispensable requisite in a barter, and anticipated with extreme delight.

Carleton Island is higher up the river, and has greater conveniences annexed to it than Oswegatche, having an excellent harbor, with a strong fortification well garrisoned. It affords excellent accommodation for shipping, and may be considered as the naval storehouse for supplying Niagara and the other posts. There are vessels of considerable bulk continually sailing from thence to Niagara, Oswego, etc. There is also a Commodore of the Lakes, whose residence is on the island.

Fort Oswego on Lake Ontario, formerly called Lake Frontenac, is a good fortification, and capable of containing 600 men. This post is particularly important, as it is the key to the United States, and commands the opening to the North, or Hudson's River, protecting the trade with the Indians who live on the banks of the River St. Lawrence, and the whole extent of the great sheet of water near which it stands, reckoned about eighty leagues in length and in some places from twenty-five to thirty broad.

When the English were in possession of the Colonies, Albany commanded the trade with the Indians; and it is well known that no place in America furnished such a quantity of furs and skins, not even the Hudson's Bay settlements, whose utmost extent of trade is far inferior to the produce collected here. These

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furs and skins were procured from Canada and brought to Fort Oswego by the Indians, who disposed of them to the agents sent there by the merchants of Albany. Besides, Indian goods may be conveyed from Albany to Fort Oswego at a cheaper rate than from Montreal to the new settlements at Cataraqui and the head of the Bay of Kenty, and at less risk, because the stream of the Mohawk River is not so strong as that of the Cataraqui River, between the Lake and Montreal, and there are not so many falls of water.

Fort Niagara is on the same lake, where there is also a good garrison. This lake takes its rise from Lake Erie, and after a course of fifteen leagues empties itself into Lake Ontario. About four leagues before it enters the lake it is intercepted by the great fall which is mentioned by various authors, who do not agree in opinion respecting its height; but from the most authentic accounts joined to my own observations, I am inclined to coincide with the judgment of Captain Pierie, who made an actual survey and describes the height to be 146 feet, and the width 1040, which proves that the accounts of Father Hennepin and La Salle were erroneous, who both agree in calling the perpendicular height 600 feet.<sup>14</sup> The dis-

<sup>14</sup>According to modern surveys the actual height of the American Fall is 164 feet, and of the Canadian Fall, 150 feet; while the width of the river at the brink of the falls is 4750 feet. A vivacious narrative of

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tance from Fort Niagara to Fort Stanwix<sup>15</sup> is about 280 miles, through the Genesee country, which I traveled with great ease in about eight days. This post, therefore, is of the most essential importance to protect the Indians who are in alliance with Great Britain, and to secure the valuable and undivided advantage of their trade.

The Detroit is so called from being a strait between Lake Erie and Lake Huron, and commands the trade from the Ohio, Illinois, Mississippi, and the Upper Lakes, which post is resorted to by the Ottawas, Hurons, Miamis, Ohio, Mississippi, Delaware, and Tuscarora Indians, besides the Messesawgas.

These five posts are situated at the back of the three states of New England, New York, and Pennsylvania, and at a very small distance from the Loyalist settlements.

The last post is Michilimackinac,<sup>16</sup> which is situated between Lake Huron and Lake

misstatements made by writers about Niagara Falls may be found in Frank H. Severance, *Studies of the Niagara Frontier* (Buffalo, 1911), pp. 291-311.

<sup>15</sup> Fort Stanwix was built in 1758 at the head of navigation on the Mohawk River, where the city of Rome, New York, now stands. Here were negotiated several important Indian treaties, the last one in 1788. The place was unsuccessfully besieged by the British at the time of Burgoyne's invasion, in the summer of 1777.

<sup>16</sup> On the post of Mackinac and its importance see Alexander Henry's *Travels and Adventures*, the annual volume of the Lakeside Classics series for 1921.

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Michigan upon an isthmus<sup>17</sup> about 130 leagues long and 22 wide, and is the last fortress towards the northwest. This point of land is on the north of the straits through which the Lake of the Illinois or Michigan, 300 leagues in circumference, empties itself into Lake Huron, which is of equal extent. The strait is about three leagues long, and one broad, and half a league distant from the mouth of the Illinois.

This is perhaps the most material of all the barriers, and of the greatest importance to the commercial interest of this country, as it intercepts all the trade of the Indians of the upper country from Hudson Bay to Lake Superior, and affords protection to various tribes of savages, who constantly resort to it to receive presents from the commanding officer, and from whence the traders who go to the Northwest, take their departure for the Grand Portage<sup>18</sup> or grand carrying place, which is nine miles in length, before they enter on the waters communicating with the Northwest.

Were the English to remain in possession of every part of Canada except the posts, numberless doors would be left open for the Americans to smuggle in their goods, and in process of

<sup>17</sup> The "isthmus" is, of course, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

<sup>18</sup> On Grand Portage, and the trade route to the Northwest, see Henry's *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 229 ff.

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time the illicit trade would supersede the necessity of the exportation of British goods from England to Canada, and the commercial benefits arising from the consumption of our manufactures would be entirely lost. In that case Canada would be of little service to England in a commercial point of view. How far it is worth the expense of retaining, politically considered, is not for me to discuss.



## Chapter 4

### SCALPING AND INDIAN WARFARE

HAVING endeavored to explain the nature and importance of the Five and Six Nation Indians, and described the situation of the posts, and the probable consequences of complying with the treaty, I shall return to my situation at Montreal.

Having stayed with my employer seven years, and not being willing to enter into a new agreement, I determined to pursue the bent of my inclinations; and being naturally of a roving disposition, which was increased by my frequent associations with the savages, I entered a volunteer at the head of a party of Indians, thinking that my country might at some future period derive advantage from my more intimate knowledge of the country and its language.

My *entrée* was in 1775, when a party of about thirty of the Americans, commanded by the famous Ethan Allen, appeared at Long Point, about two miles from Montreal, intending to plunder the town. They were, however, disappointed in their expectations by the good conduct of Captain Crawford of the Twenty-sixth Regiment, who with about forty regulars and some volunteers sallied out and made the

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enemy retreat to a barn, where an engagement took place, in which Major Carden, Mr. Paterson, a volunteer, and three privates were killed, and I was wounded in the foot; but on the arrival of a field piece the enemy surrendered.<sup>19</sup>

Being beloved by the Indians, and preferring active service with them to any other mode of life, I accompanied Lieutenant Peter Johnson and Lieutenant Walter Butler,<sup>20</sup> with a few Mohawks, to attack the Americans at Isle au Noix, whom we defeated, taking a great many prisoners. During the engagement we lost two volunteers and three privates. In this action I received a wound in the head from the butt end of a musket.

I then joined the Eighth Regiment of Foot, commanded by Captain Foster, to attack the Americans at the Cedars, whom we also defeated. The prisoners were left at Fort St. Vielle, or Prison Island, at the foot of the Falls, under a proper guard; and the remains of our small army, consisting of about 150 men, went down to La Chine to engage another body of Americans; but finding them too strongly en-

<sup>19</sup> Allen himself left an interesting account of this engagement in his spirited *Narrative of Col. Ethan Allen's Captivity* . . . (Walpole, N. H., 1807), pp. 27-41.

<sup>20</sup> Butler was a New York Tory who in 1778 led the Iroquois to the Cherry Valley massacre. The action here described was one phase of the operations of General Richard Montgomery against Canada in the autumn of 1775.

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trenched, we retreated to Point Clair, where we stayed till we received intelligence that General Arnold,<sup>21</sup> with four thousand men were at Isle au Noix, and that Major Gordon was killed on his way to St. John's, about two miles from the fort. On this occasion it may not be amiss to observe that the custom adopted by the Americans, and with so much success, of levelling their pieces at the officers, originated with the Indians, who are possessed with an idea that the men 'will naturally be thrown into confusion when their leaders are dead. This, however, is not without exception: the Mattaugwessawacks, whose country lies westward of Lake Superior, hold the persons of officers sacred; and Josepsis, one of their tribe, who was taken prisoner and sold to the Penobscot Indians, says that the savages they were at war with have adopted the same method.

I was immediately ordered on a scout, at the head of ten Connecedaga or Rondaxe Indians, with Captain La Motte,<sup>22</sup> a Canadian gentleman, in search of the person who had

<sup>21</sup> Benedict Arnold, who won fame for his spirited conduct in this campaign and in the operations against Burgoyne in 1777, and everlasting infamy through his traitorous negotiations for the surrender of West Point in 1780.

<sup>22</sup> Probably this person was the Captain Guillaume Lamothe whom George Rogers Clark captured at Vincennes in 1779 and sent with Governor Hamilton to a Virginia duncheon. On this point see Clark's *Conquest of the Illinois*, in the Lakeside Classics series for 1920.

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killed Major Gordon, and to reconnoitre the woods in hopes of gaining information of the real force of the Americans at Isle au Noix. To avoid suspicion we were all dressed like savages, and as Captain La Motte and myself were well acquainted with the Iroquois language, it was impossible to distinguish us from the natives. We were out six days and nights, with very little provisions, living chiefly on the scrapings of the inner bark of trees and wild roots, particularly onions, which grow in great abundance, and are not disagreeable to the palate. Hunger reconciles us to everything that will support nature, and makes the most indifferent food acceptable. From my own woeful experience I can assert that what at any other time would have been unpleasant and even nauseous, under the pressure of hunger is not only greedily eaten, but relished as a luxury. Those who are acquainted with the nature of roving in the woods in time of war, know the necessity of traveling light, and particularly on an Indian scout, as the savages seldom take anything but a small quantity of Indian corn and maple sugar, which, after beating the corn between two stones, they mix with water, and on this they subsist. During this expedition, as the business was urgent and the enemy near at hand, we depended on adventitious food.

On the last day's march, returning without being able to obtain any intelligence, one of

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the Indians heard a noise resembling the breaking of a stick; the chief of the band sent out a scout, who soon returned with a prisoner. The man appeared much frightened, imagining himself in the hands of savages only. Having bound him to a tree, I being the only one of the party who understood English, questioned him very closely respecting the situation and force of the enemy and interpreted the conversation. When he heard me talk his own language he was agreeably surprised, and his fears in some degree giving way to hope, he begged me to save him from the fury of the Indians, whose general conduct in war had filled his mind with the most dreadful apprehensions. I assured him that if he would faithfully satisfy all my inquiries his life should be spared. He cheerfully complied with the requisition, and directed me to a place from whence we might have a clear view of the Americans, who were encamped on the opposite shore.

Having left him bound, we proceeded about two miles through swamps, till we came in sight of the enemy. The Indians immediately panted for action, but Captain La Motte thought it prudent to restrain their ardor, and ordered them to retreat into the woods, still keeping our object in view. Soon after, a boat full of men crossed the river and landed without perceiving us. The Indians instantly kindled a fire and each man filled his blanket

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with rotten wood and leaves, till it was extended to the size of a man; then placing them near the fire, to appear like Indians asleep, they retired to a small distance, to give the Americans an opportunity of coming up unmolested, not doubting but they would immediately fire at the blankets. The manœuvre succeeded to our expectation; for the Americans, discovering the smoke, advanced towards the fire, and perceiving the blankets, discharged their muskets. The savages immediately rushed from their ambush, and setting up the war whoop, fell upon the enemy, scalped seven of them, and took five prisoners, whom we painted like ourselves. We then returned, released the prisoner from the tree, and conducted them all to St. John's, where they were examined by Colonel England, who ordered me to take them to Sir Guy Carleton without delay.

Having executed this commission to the satisfaction of the commander-in-chief, I remained some time with my old friends, till I received a message from Sir Guy Carleton to attend him; when he ordered me to join Brigadier-general Nesbit, with the Twenty-ninth and Forty-seventh regiments, in the latter of which I served as a volunteer a considerable time; but finding no vacancy, and having no allowance for my services, to enable me to live and appear as I wished, I quitted the regiment to enjoy my favorite Indian life;

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and as I knew their manner of living and could accommodate myself to their diet, I thought I might probably continue serviceable to my country in scouting parties, and accordingly accompanied a party of savages to the Lake of the Two Mountains, fifteen leagues above Montreal, a village belonging to the Connecdagas, carrying a scalp as a trophy of my services.

Scalping is a mode of torture peculiar to the Indians. If a blow is given with the tomahawk previous to the scalp being taken off, it is followed by instant death; but where scalping only is inflicted, it puts the person to excruciating pain, though death does not always ensue. There are instances of persons of both sexes now living in America, and no doubt in other countries, who after being scalped, by wearing a plate of silver or tin on the crown of the head, to keep it from cold, enjoy a good state of health, and are seldom afflicted with pains.<sup>23</sup>

When an Indian strikes a person on the temple with a tomahawk, the victim instantly drops; he then seizes his hair with one hand, twisting it very tight together to separate the skin from the head, and placing his knee on the breast, with the other he draws the scalping-

<sup>23</sup> The truth of Long's statement in this connection is attested by numerous authentic instances in western history. A concrete illustration is the case of Isabella Cooper, a young girl who was scalped in the Chicago massacre of August 15, 1812; she lived to grow to womanhood and became the mother of children.

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knife from the sheath and cuts the skin around the forehead, pulling it off with his teeth. As he is very dexterous, the operation is generally performed in two minutes. The scalp is then extended on three hoops, dried in the sun, and rubbed over with vermilion. Some of the Indians in time of war, when scalps are well paid for, divide one into five or six parts, and carry them to the nearest post, in hopes of receiving a reward proportionate to the number.

When the scalp is taken from the head of one of their own people, they frequently make the dead body of advantage to them by dressing it up and painting it with vermilion. They then place it against a tree, with weapons in its hand to induce the Indians to suppose it an enemy on the watch; and round the body they set spears in the ground, so as scarcely to be discernible. The Indians, on seeing the person against the tree, and anxious to make him a prisoner, in the eagerness of running fall on the points of the spears, and being disabled from proceeding are easily made prisoners.

Before I close this subject I shall relate an anecdote of two savages of different nations, in the time of Sir William Johnson.

A Mohawk, of the name of Scunnionsa, or the Elk, and a Chippewa Indian of the name of Cark Cark, or the Crow, having met at a council of war near Crown Point in the year 1757, were extolling their own merits and boasting of their superiority in taking scalps.



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The Mohawk contended that he could take a larger scalp than the Chippewa warrior, who was very highly offended and desired that the experiment might be made. They parted, each pursuing a different route, after having first agreed to meet at a certain place on a particular day, when a council was to be held. At the time appointed they returned, and appeared at the council. The Mohawk laid down his scalp, which was the skin of the head and neck of a man stuffed with fine moss and sewed up with deer's sinews, and the eyes fastened in. The chiefs expressed their approbation, and pronounced him to be a great and brave warrior. The Chippewa then rose and looking earnestly at the Mohawk, desired the interpreter to tell him that it was an old woman's scalp, which is considered as a term of great reproach, and called to one of his sons to bring forward his scalp; when instantly he exhibited to their view the complete skin of a man, stuffed with down feathers, and sewed very close with deer's sinews. The chiefs loaded him with praise and unanimously acknowledged his superiority. The Mohawk warrior, fired with resentment, withdrew from the council meditating revenge; and as soon as he saw the Chippewa come forth he followed him, and watching a convenient opportunity, dispatched him with his tomahawk, rejoicing that he had, even in this dastardly manner, got rid of a victorious rival.

## Chapter 5

### THE CONNECEDAGA OR RONDAXE INDIANS

THE savages of this nation are of the Chippewa tribe, and speak a mixture of the Iroquois and Chippewa tongues. They were driven from the Upper Country at the time of the great Indian war, about the year 1720, and settled on the Lake of the Two Mountains. There are about 200 inhabitants, who are very industrious and cultivate the land in the manner of the Cahnuagas. They also breed cattle, and live in a degree of civilization unknown to most of the Chippewa tribes. There is also a town near Lake Erie, in the limits of the United States, which is inhabited by about 1500 of this nation, of whom the Reverend Mr. Charles Beattie gives a very favorable account.<sup>24</sup>

Since the settlement of the Connecedagas they have intermarried with the Cahnuaga, St. Regis, and Mohawk Indians, which is the reason why their language is less pure, though some of them speak the original tongue, which

<sup>24</sup> Charles Beattie, *Journal of a Two Months' Tour with a View of Promoting Religion Among the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania and of Introducing Christianity Among the Indians to the Westward of the Alegheny Mountains*. . . (London, 1768).

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in my frequent communications with the Chippewas beyond Michilimackinac I found in every respect perfectly understood. It was among these Indians that I first acquired the rudiments of a language which from long habit is become more familiar to me than my own; and I hope I shall not be accused of vanity in asserting that the vocabulary and familiar phrases subjoined to this work are more copious than will be found in any former publication. In spelling them I have been particularly careful in using such letters and accents as best express the Indian words according to our pronunciation. To lay down general rules for the orthography of a language which has never been reduced to a system, I do not pretend; my endeavors may perhaps assist those who are better informed in the principles of universal grammar.

The Connecedagas are esteemed brave warriors; and my opinion, founded on long experience of their conduct and bravery, coincides with that which the English, from report only, entertain of them. No nation of savages were ever more true to the British interest, not even the Mohawks, whose fidelity is become almost proverbial. During the continuance of the American war they neglected their families and domestic concerns to fight for the English, which the Cahnugas (though descendants of the Mohawks and Munseys, or Mawhiccon Indians, commonly called River

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Indians) did not with so much cheerfulness. Perhaps the relationship of the latter to the Delawares before their defection, whom the Indians by way of derision used to call old women, might occasion this temporary reluctance; but if that was the cause, it was but of very short duration, for to do them justice, when they took up the tomahawk they behaved with great intrepidity, and proved that the blood of the ancient Mohawks still ran in their veins. Some have, though I think without much candor, imputed their services to the fear of our government, and the resentment of the savages in our interest on the one hand, and the hopes of considerable rewards on the other; but as such reflections may be far from the truth, it cannot answer any purpose to comment severely on their conduct. It is sufficient to know they were our allies, and in all probability will continue friendly to the British nation. Great praise is due on this account to Major Carlton, a brave and experienced officer, whom they loved with a Roman friendship; they flew to his standard with alacrity, obeyed him with cheerfulness, and never deserted him: no instance of friendship or attachment, either ancient or modern, could surpass it.

It requires good natural sense and a thorough knowledge of the dispositions of the Indians to persuade them to place unlimited confidence in their European or American

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leaders; to which must always be added a seeming approbation of their advice, and an endeavor to conform to their wishes, never obstinately pursuing a design, either offensive or defensive, contrary to their opinion. How fatal a different line of conduct may prove, the destruction of General Braddock is a melancholy instance. By his haughty demeanor and strict adherence to his own plan in direct opposition to the counsel of experienced chiefs, he lost their friendship and died unlamented, confirming them in an opinion they had before often hinted, "that he wanted both skill and prudence in war." Even the great Washington incurred their censure by his conduct, and gave occasion to an Indian chief of the name of Thanachrishon, of the Seneca tribe, judging him by their own rules, to say, "that he was a good-natured man, but had no experience."

An impartial mind will require but little to be persuaded that the Indians are superior to us in the woods. It is their natural element (if I may be allowed the expression), and a tree or river, of which their recollection never fails, guides them to the secret recesses of a deep wood, either for safety or the purpose of ambush. As they pay little attention to the rising or setting sun, it at first surprised me by what method they traveled from place to place without any material aberration; but this they soon explained by assuring me that

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they had not the least difficulty in going from one spot to another, being governed by the moss on the trees, which always remains on the north side, but on the south it wastes and decays. They remark, also, that the branches are larger, and the leaves more luxuriant on the south than on the north side of the tree. The most enlightened part of mankind, I am persuaded, cannot be more exact in their mode of judging, nor more attentive to the works of nature.

To prove further, if there are any who doubt it, that the Indians possess strong natural abilities, and are even capable of receiving improvement from the pursuits of learning, I shall relate a story from Kalm's *Travels*.<sup>25</sup>

"An old American savage, being at an inn at New York, met with a gentleman who gave him some liquor, and being rather lively, boasted he could read and write English. The gentleman, willing to indulge him in displaying his knowledge, begged leave to propose a question, to which the old man consented. He was then asked who was the first [man] circumcised? The Indian immediately replied, 'Father Abraham,' and directly asked the gentleman, who was the first Quaker? He said it was very uncertain, that people differed in their sentiments exceedingly. The

<sup>25</sup> Peter Kalm was a Swedish scientist who travelled extensively in America in the years 1748-51. An English translation of his *Travels* appeared in 1770.

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Indian, perceiving the gentleman unable to resolve the question, put his fingers into his mouth to express his surprise, and looking steadfastly, told him that Mordecai was the first Quaker, for he would not pull off his hat to Haman."

Mr. Adair says<sup>26</sup> the Cherokees are very apt at giving people nicknames. A dull, stalking fellow they call a turkey-buzzard; an ill-tempered man, a wasp; a talkative person, a grasshopper; a hoarse voice, they say resembles a bull; and an interpreter whose manners and conversation are obscene, they call a smock interpreter.

The disposition of the Indians is naturally proud and self-sufficient. They think themselves the wisest of the sons of men, and are extremely offended when their advice is rejected. The feats of valor of their ancestors, continually repeated and impressed upon their minds, inspire them with the most exalted notions of their own prowess and bravery. Hence arises the firmest reliance on their own courage and power; and though but a handful of men, comparatively speaking, they are vain enough to think they can overthrow both French and English whenever they please. They say the latter are fools, for they hold their guns half man high, and let them snap; but they themselves take sight and seldom fail of

<sup>26</sup> James Adair, author of a well-known *History of the American Indians*, published at London in 1775.

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doing execution, which, they add, is the true intention of going to war.

These exalted notions of self-consequence are more peculiar to the Five Nations, and for which they are more eminently distinguished than other tribes of savages, although none of them are deficient in this respect. Such sentiments as these have made the Iroquois dreaded and revered by others, for their superior understanding and valor, and likewise has a tendency to increase their fame. Although they decrease in numbers daily, the thirst of glory will never be extinguished among them whilst there is a breast to nourish it. They will never shrink from danger when honor is at stake.

The Iroquois laugh when you talk to them of obedience to kings, for they cannot reconcile the idea of submission with the dignity of man. Each individual is a sovereign in his own mind, and as he conceives he derives his freedom from the Great Spirit alone, he cannot be induced to acknowledge any other power.

They are extremely jealous and easily offended, and when they have been once induced to suspect, it is very difficult to remove the impression. They carry their resentments with them to the grave, and bequeath them to the rising generation.

Those who have associated with them, though they may admire their heroism in war, their resolution in supporting the most excru-



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ciating tortures, and the stability of their friendships, cannot but lament the dreadful effects of their displeasure, which has no bounds. It is this violence of temper, which is generally in the extreme, which makes them so difficult to subdue and so dangerous to encourage; too much indulgence they attribute to fear, and too much severity brings on resentment.

To remove these strong prejudices (which, however prone human nature may be to encourage them, would never prove so prejudicial to society unless continually promoted by the advice and example of the aged), has been the constant endeavor of those nations who have been in alliance with them, and some attempts have been made to soften their manners by the introduction of the Christian religion, whose precepts are so wonderfully calculated to destroy every blood-thirsty sentiment, and make mankind happier in themselves, and better members of the community. In this laudable pursuit our neighbors, the French, have been the most successful, at least so far as an alteration in external behavior may be considered as an indication of the amendment of the heart. The good conduct of the inhabitants of several Indian villages in Canada bears testimony to this observation. Nevertheless, in contradiction to this remark, Mr. James Adair observes that the French Canadians are highly censurable for debauching

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our peaceful northern Indians with their "infernal catechism."

Though I am not an advocate for creeds inimical to the peace of society, I believe the censure is too severe, for however formerly they might have been influenced by bigoted priests instilling into their minds sentiments unfavorable to the subjects of Great Britain, I am clearly of opinion that they have for many years used their best endeavors to inculcate the principles of the Gospel. Indeed, it is always to be lamented when either politics or religion are made subservient to each other; this being properly considered, perhaps the French are not more blameable than other nations. We are too apt to involve others in our disputes, and religion is too frequently introduced by bigots to assist the cause they wish to support.

With regard to those Indians who have been accustomed to the society of English traders, and even preachers (sorry am I to observe it), their sentiments, manners and practices are very different. The alteration is manifestly for the worse; they have become more degenerate, and added to the turbulence of passions unsubdued by reason the vices of lying and swearing, which unfortunately they have learned from us.

The testimony of Mr. Sargeant, a gentleman of New England, supports this assertion; who relates that in a journey to the Shawnee In-

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dians (the allies and dependents of the Six Nations), and some other tribes, when he offered to instruct them in the Christian religion they rejected it with disdain; they even reproached Christianity, told him the traders would lie, cheat, and debauch their young women, and even their wives, when the husbands were from home. They further added that the Senecas had given them their country, but charged them never to receive Christianity from the English.

I shall subjoin one more proof to this. Governor Hunter, by order of Queen Anne, presented the Indians with clothes, and other things of which they were extremely fond; and addressing them at a council, which was held at Albany, told them that their good mother, the queen, had not only generously provided them with fine clothes for their body, but likewise intended to adorn their souls by the preaching of the Gospel, and that some ministers should be sent to instruct them. When the Governor had finished his speech the oldest chief rose up and said that in the name of all the Indians he thanked their good mother, the queen, for the fine clothes she had sent them; but in regard to the ministers, they already had some of them, who instead of preaching the Gospel to them, taught them to drink to excess, to cheat and quarrel among themselves, and entreated the government to take from them the preachers, and a number

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of Europeans who came among them; for before their arrival the Indians were honest, sober, and innocent people; but now most of them were rogues; that they formerly had the fear of God, but that now they hardly believed his existence.

To extenuate as much as possible this charge against the English, let it be observed that the vice and immorality complained of is to be attributed in a great measure to the traders, who used to purchase convicts and hire men of infamous character to carry up their goods among the Indians, many of whom ran away from their masters to join the savages. The iniquitous conduct of those people essentially injured the English in the opinion of the Indians, and fixed an odium which will not be soon or easily removed.

## Chapter 6

### FROM MONTREAL TO MACKINAC

HAVING finished this long digression, I shall continue my history from the time of going to the village of the Connecdagas, where I stayed some months, making several excursions in scouting parties and frequently bringing in prisoners, which did not escape the notice of Sir Guy Carleton, who at the next interview approved my conduct and wished me to serve again in his regiment. I told him I was extremely happy I had rendered myself useful to my country, and considered myself highly honored by so flattering a mark of his approbation; but that the life of a volunteer, though very honorable, would not entitle me to pay, and there was not a vacancy in any of the British regiments: he then appointed me a midshipman on board the ship *Fell*, commanded by Captain Barnsfer, lying in the River St. Lawrence, in which service I continued till she was ordered for England.

As soon as I quitted the navy I returned to the Lake of the Two Mountains, and continued doing my utmost in the line of an interpreter, and at intervals perfecting myself in the Indian languages, particularly in the Chippewa

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tongue, as I purposed engaging in the service of a merchant to go to the Northwest, the first convenient opportunity. I also applied myself sedulously to obtain a complete knowledge of their manners and customs, and with that view partook of their amusements, and was soon noticed as a good dancer. To this qualification I also added the perfect notes of the different war whoops, as naturally as a savage; and by conforming to their ways and taking pleasure in their diversions I was soon endeared to them, and left them with regret.

The dances among the Indians are many and various, and to each of them there is a particular whoop.

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|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. The calumet dance     | 7. The prisoner's    |
| 2. The war dance.        | dance.               |
| 3. The chief's dance.    | 8. The return dance. |
| 4. The set-out dance.    | 9. The spear dance.  |
| 5. The scalp dance.      | 10. The marriage     |
| 6. The dead dance.       | dance.               |
| 11. The sacrifice dance. |                      |

All these I was perfect master of, frequently leading the set. If accidentally a stranger came among us (unless I chose to be noticed), no one could distinguish me from the Indians.

Presuming on my appearing exactly like a savage, I occasionally went down in a canoe to Montreal, and frequently passed the posts as an Indian. Sometimes I would distinguish myself at a charivari, which is a custom that

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prevails in different parts of Canada of assembling with old pots, kettles, etc., and beating them at the doors of new-married people; but generally either when the man is older than the woman, or the parties have been twice married. In those cases they beat a *charivari*, hallooing out very vociferously, until the man is obliged to obtain their silence by pecuniary contribution or submit to be abused with the vilest language. *Charivari*, in French, means a paltry kind of music, which I suppose is the origin of the custom.

Not content with being a proficient in their sports, I learned to make a canoe, bark a tree for the purpose, and perform the whole business as regularly as the natives. I also made moc-casins, or Indian shoes, of deer-skins dressed and smoked to make the leather soft and pliable, and worked with porcupine quills and small beads, to which are sometimes suspended hawk-bells. Those made by the Mohawks at the Grand River near Niagara are preferred for their superior workmanship and taste, and are sometimes sold so high as four dollars a pair, but in general they may be purchased without ornaments for one dollar. They are more pleasant to wear than English shoes; in summer they are cooler to the feet, and in winter, from being made roomy, they will admit a thick sock, to prevent the excessive cold from penetrating. The Indians, in their war dances, sew hawk-bells and small pieces

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of tin on them to make a jingling noise, and at a dance where I was present, these, with the addition of a large horse-bell, which I gave the chief who led the dance, made a noise not much unlike a Dutch concert.

The savages are esteemed very active and nimble-footed, but admitting this general opinion to prevail, it is well known the Europeans are more swift in running a small distance. Their chief merit, I am of opinion, consists in their being able to continue a long time in one steady pace, which makes them useful in going express through the woods; and as they require little sleep and can subsist on roots and water, which they take *en volant*, they do not waste much time in refreshment. They are also admirable swimmers, and are not afraid of the strongest currents. With these qualifications they are certainly a very useful race of men, and as long as the English retain any possessions in Canada, should be considered as the most valuable acquisition; indeed, as indispensably necessary, and every endeavor should be exerted to retain them in our interest.

With regard to bodily strength, they are excelled by many; and even in hunting, the Virginians equal them in every part of the chase, though all the world allow them the merit of being good marksmen. I remember seeing some Americans shooting at a loon, a bird nearly the size of an English goose. This bird is remarkable for diving, and generally



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rises some yards from the place where it dips. They fired at the distance of 150 yards with a rifle several times without success. An Indian standing by laughed at them, and told them they were old women. They desired him to try his skill, which he instantly did: taking his gun, and resting it against a tree, he fired, and shot the loon through the neck. I confess I never saw a better shot in my life, and was highly pleased, as it gratified my pride, in giving the Americans a favorable opinion of the savages, for whom I always entertained a predilection.

The loon is a very remarkable bird, from the formation of its feet; but having no anatomical knowledge, I cannot describe it technically. They are so made that it can scarcely walk; it is therefore seldom seen on land. In calm weather it rises from the water with great difficulty, and flies as impelled by the wind, on which it seems to depend. The method usually adopted by the Indians to kill these birds is by fixing a large bough at the head of a canoe, to conceal themselves till they paddle near the place where they are; when at a convenient distance, they fire, though not always with success. In the Chippewa language it is called a *maunk*, which agrees with the French word *manquer*, to fail; it being, from its shyness, very difficult to kill. The skin, which is very tough and thick, is dried and made use of as cases to cover their guns, to prevent the wet from spoiling them.

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Having grown tired of living entirely with the savages I made an excursion to Montreal, where I met with an offer to go as interpreter to the North [west], which at first I did not care to accept; but as the salary was handsome, upon mature deliberation I embraced the opportunity of entering into that way of life, from which I fully expected profit at least, if not pleasure; but alas! I had often abundant reason to repent the pursuing the bent of my inclinations.

On the fourth of May, 1777 I left Montreal, with two large birch canoes, called by the French, *maitre canots*, having ten Canadians in each, as the number of portages require many hands to transport the goods across the landings, which can only be done on men's shoulders. As their voyage is so essentially different from the English manner of travelling, I shall relate it particularly.

The canoes are made at Trois Rivières. They are in general eight fathoms long, and one and a half wide, covered with the bark of the birch tree, and sewed very close with fibrous roots; and of this size they will carry four tons' weight each. As early in the spring as the ice will permit they are brought up to La Chine, a village nine miles above Montreal.

La Chine takes its name from the following story. Le Sieur La Salle, who was afterwards murdered by two of his own party in Canada,

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in the year 1686,<sup>27</sup> was very intent on discovering a shorter road to China than was then known; but his project failing by an accident which happened to him at this place, he was obliged to postpone his journey to the East, which induced the Canadians, by way of derision, to call it La Chine, or China; and by that name it has ever since been known.

At this place the Indian goods are put on board very carefully;<sup>28</sup> the dry merchandise in bales about eighty pounds weight, the rum, powder, and shot in small kegs. The voyage from Trois Rivières to La Chine is tedious and troublesome, as there is a strong current to combat; and without a fair wind, and occasionally a brisk gale to assist or relieve the constant use of the paddles, it would be impossible to make any way. Where the water is shallow the canoes must be forced forward with long setting poles, while the men wade knee deep, and pull against the current with ropes. This is a labor and fatigue beyond what will be easily imagined. Custom has, however, made the Canadians very expert, and I must do them the justice to say they encounter

<sup>27</sup> The assassination of La Salle occurred March 19, 1687, near the Trinity River in the modern state of Texas. Long, apparently, here uses the word Canada as synonymous with New France.

<sup>28</sup> This general account of the trade route between Montreal and Mackinac may profitably be compared with the more detailed narrative contained in Alexander Henry's *Travels and Adventures*.

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these difficulties with uncommon cheerfulness, though they sometimes exclaim, "*C'est la misere, mon bourgeois.*"

From La Chine to Michilimackinac there are thirty-six portages; the distance by land and water is about 900 miles. In favorable weather the journey is frequently performed in about a month. Great care is necessary to steer the canoes up the strong rapids; to labor and care must also be added experience to keep them upright, and prevent their striking or rubbing against the stones, as they are very slight and easily damaged. Whenever by accident they receive an injury, as they frequently do, the hole is stopped with gum, melted with a piece of charcoal; the gum by wetting immediately becomes hard, and is capable of resisting the pressure of the water. When the hole is too large to be stopped by gum only, the inner bark of the birch tree, pounded and tempered like mortar, is put on the aperture. This is covered by a linen rag, and the edges firmly cemented with gum.

We continued our voyage to La Barrière, at the head of the Long Saut, or long waterfall, a very dangerous current from the extreme rapidity of the fall. At the top of this fall there are some traders settled, but they are not of any consequence, either for the extent of their commerce or the profits arising from the peltry they collect, the savages in those parts being too well acquainted with the value of

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furs and skins to be imposed upon, unless when they are intoxicated, an advantage, I must confess, too frequently taken.

From this fall we proceeded to the Lake of the Two Mountains, where there is a village belonging to the Connecedaga Indians, already described. At this place I stayed a day among my old friends, which was all the time my engagements would allow, as it is of the most material consequence in this branch of trade to be early at the wintering ground.

We proceeded to the Ottawa, or Grand River, coasting all the way till we came to Lake Nipissing, from whence the River St. Lawrence takes its rise. We then entered the French River, leading to Lake Huron, and proceeded with very favorable weather to Michilimackinac, where we arrived on the seventeenth of June.

The country everywhere abounds with wild animals, particularly bears, moose and other deer, beaver, beaver-eaters, lynx, foxes, squirrels, fishers, otters, martens, mink, wood-cats, raccoons, wolves, musquashes, and so forth. There are scarce any but savage inhabitants to be found, who rove from place to place for subsistence, feeding on the animals they kill, except the skunk, or pole-cat, which they never eat unless pressed by the most extreme hunger.

Monsieur La Salle relates that in his voyage on the banks of the Mississippi, among the

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nation of the Oumas, who live on a river<sup>29</sup> of the same name, he saw a most extraordinary animal between the wolf and the lion; the head and shape resembling the former, and the tail and claws like those of the latter. He asserts it would attack all other animals, but was never known to hurt a man; that sometimes it would carry its prey on its back, and when it had eaten till satisfied, it concealed the rest under the leaves, or other cover; that every animal dreaded it to such a degree that they would not touch any part of the prey it had left; and that the Indians called it *Michibichi*, which is an animal of the species of the tiger, but smaller and less speckled, and is now known to be the panther.

The beaver is a curious animal, but it has been described by so many authors that I shall only observe what I believe they have not yet mentioned. It is seldom seen in the day time. After sunset it leaves its habitation and ventures abroad, either to work or procure food. It also takes this opportunity to wash itself. But the most remarkable singularity of this animal is that it lies with its tail constantly in the water, to prevent its getting stiff. The flesh of it is very good, either boiled or roasted, but the tail is the best part. While I am upon the subject of dainties, I may add that the snout of the moose is also highly esteemed. Not any of the animals in North America are

<sup>29</sup> Evidently the Miami River and tribe.

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to be dreaded, except the grizzled bear, which generally keeps in as warm a climate as possible: wherever it comes it makes dreadful havoc, destroying men and even, frequently, whole families.<sup>30</sup>

During the time I stayed at Michilimackinac a remarkable circumstance of bravery and generosity was communicated to me, which may not be unentertaining to the reader.

An Indian boy about fifteen years of age was standing at some distance from the fort when a savage fired his gun and accidentally killed an Englishman. As he was advancing he discovered the boy leaning against a tree, and not being of the same nation, he formed the resolution of taking him prisoner. Having no suspicion of the boy's intention, he went up to him and took him by the arm. The boy very artfully drew back, and shot the Indian through the chin. This so incensed him that he was raising his hand to tomahawk him, when another Indian instantly coming up, asked his companion who had wounded him? He replied, the boy, adding that he would immediately take his scalp. The other prevented his bloody purpose, and told him he would protect the lad, for he was too brave to

<sup>30</sup> The grizzly bear, which the expedition of Lewis and Clark made known to the scientific world, was an object of dread alike to the Indian and to the early white hunters. Even so sturdy a character as Captain Meriwether Lewis testifies that he "had rather fight two Indians than one bear."

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die. He carried him to the fort, where he was purchased by the commanding officer, to prevent the Indian whom he had wounded from killing him.



## Chapter 7

### REMOVAL TO LAKE SUPERIOR AND ADOPTION BY THE CHIPPEWA

HAVING taken in Indian corn and hard grease (the food all traders carry to the Upper Country) and exchanged my large canoes, or *maître canots*, for smaller ones, the latter being more convenient to transport across the carrying places, and better calculated to run into small creeks,<sup>31</sup> we proceeded to the Falls of St. Mary, a strait so-called, which is formed by two branches that separate from each other at the farthest point of the lake. Here is a small picketted fort, built by the Indians, and about ten log houses for the residence of English and French traders. The nation of the Sauteurs formerly were settled at the foot of the Falls, and the Jesuits had a house near them. At this place there is abundance of fine fish, particularly pickarel, trout, and whitefish of an uncommon size.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> The canoes in use between Montreal and Mackinac were larger than those employed in the country northwest of Lake Superior. Alexander Henry (*op. cit.*, pp. 15-16) gives a detailed description of the former, and a shorter one (pp. 230-31) of the latter.

<sup>32</sup> For a more detailed description of the village and fishery at Sault Ste. Marie a few years before Long's visit, see Alexander Henry's narrative, pp. 57-61.

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From this place we continued our voyage to Lake Superior, formerly called Lake Tracy, in honor of Mons. de Tracy, who was appointed viceroy of America by the French king in June, 1665. It is reckoned 600 leagues in circumference and on it are a great number of large and small islands. At the entrance of this lake is a high rock, somewhat in the shape of a man, which the Chippewa Indians call *Kitchee Manitoo*, or the Master of Life. Here they all stop to make their offerings, which they do by throwing tobacco and other things into the water. By this they intend to make an acknowledgment to the rock, as the representative of the Supreme Being, for the blessings they enjoy, cheerfully sacrificing to him their ornaments, and those things which they hold most dear: an example worthy of imitation, so far as respects the good intention of the creature to the Creator, exhibiting an evident proof that man in his natural state, without any of the refinements of civilization, is sensible of his dependence on an invisible power, however ignorantly or unworthily he may express his belief. God alone knoweth the heart, and will judge every man by the knowledge he hath.

Superstition is a noxious plant, but it hath flourished in every climate from the torrid to the frigid zone. If its effects have proved so pernicious among civilized nations as we know they have, is it to be wondered that barbarians

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have suffered by it? The poor, untutored Indian will not incur a great degree of censure for obeying the dictates of his uninformed nature, and following implicitly the custom of his ancestors. Revealed religion has not been given to all, and it is a melancholy reflection that those who have been enlightened by it are not so superior to the savages as one should naturally expect to find them.

In this rock there are several cavities near a mile in length and about twenty feet in width, arched at the top. The lake freezes only close to the shore, the water being constantly in a swell and the waves frequently mountains high, which is easily accounted for when we consider its immense extent. On a calm day, a little distance from shore, sturgeon may be seen in very deep water. The surrounding land is high and rocky, and the woods extremely thick. The palm, birch, ash, spruce, and cedar grow large and in great abundance. The North West Company, established at Montreal, keep a vessel on the lake to transport their goods from Michilimackinac to the Grand Portage on the northwest side, and return with the peltry collected in the inland.

On the fourth of July we arrived at Pays Plat,<sup>33</sup> on the northeast side of the lake, where we unpacked our goods and made the bales smaller, having by the Indian accounts 180

<sup>33</sup> For a description of the Pays Plat country, see Alexander Henry's *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 228-29.

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carrying-places to the part where I intended to winter. On our landing we discovered at some distance a number of Indians, which induced us to accelerate the arrangement of the cargo, in case of barter, and be prepared to embark when the business was finished. Everything being properly secured, I made up to the savages, and calculated their number at 150. Most of them were of the Chippewa tribes; the rest were of the nation of the Wasses. They gave me fish, dried meat, and skins, which I returned with trifling presents. The chief, whose name was Matchee Quewish,<sup>34</sup> held a council, and finding I understood their language, proposed to adopt me as a brother warrior. Though I had not undergone this ceremony, I was not entirely ignorant of the nature of it, having been informed by other traders of the pain they endured in their adoption, though they declared they were favored exceedingly. I determined, however, to submit to it, lest my refusal of the honor intended me should be attributed to fear, and so render me unworthy of the esteem of those from whom I expected to derive great advantages, and with whom I had engaged to continue for a considerable time.

<sup>34</sup> This was the chief who planned the capture of the British fort at Mackinac in Pontiac's War. Our only first-hand account of this affair is the one contained in Alexander Henry's narrative. For personal details concerning Chief Matchekewis, see Henry, p. 157.

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The ceremony of adoption is as follows: A feast is prepared of dog's flesh, boiled in bear's grease, with huckleberries, of which it is expected every one should heartily partake. When the repast is over, the war song is sung in the following words:

"Master of Life, view us well: we receive a brother warrior who appears to have sense, shows strength in his arm, and does not refuse his body to the enemy."

After the war song, if the person does not discover any sign of fear, he is regarded with reverence and esteem; courage, in the opinion of the savages, being considered not only as indispensable, but as the greatest recommendation. He is then seated on a beaver robe and presented with a pipe of war to smoke, which is put round to every warrior, and a wampum belt is thrown over his neck.

The calumet, or Indian pipe, which is much larger than that the Indians usually smoke, is made of marble, stone, or clay, either red, white, or black, according to the custom of the nation, but the red is mostly esteemed. The length of the handle is about four feet and a half, and made of strong cane or wood, decorated with feathers of various colors, with a number of twists of female hair interwoven in different forms. The head is finely polished; two wings are fixed to it, which makes it in appearance not unlike to Mercury's wand. This calumet is the symbol of peace,

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and the savages hold it in such estimation that a violation of any treaty where it has been introduced would, in their opinion, be attended with the greatest misfortunes.

Wampum is of several colors, but the white and black are chiefly used. The former is made of the inside of the conque, or clam shell; the latter of the mussel: both are worked in the form of a long bead, and perforated in order to their being strung on leather and made up in belts.

These belts are for various purposes. When a council is held they are given out with the speeches, and always proportioned in their size and the number of the rows of wampum which they contain to the idea the Indians entertain of the importance of the meeting. They frequently consist of both colors. Those given to Sir William Johnson, of immortal memory,<sup>35</sup> were in several rows, black on each side and white in the middle: the white, being placed in the center, was to express peace, and that the path between them was fair and open. In the center of the belt was the figure of a diamond, made of white wampum, which the Indians call the council fire.

When Sir William Johnson held a treaty with the savages he took the belt by one end,

<sup>35</sup> Sir William Johnson was the most successful and noted Indian agent of the British colonies. A short sketch of his career is given in Henry's *Travels and Adventures*, p. 158, footnote 68.

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while the Indian chief held the other. If the chief had anything to say, he moved his finger along the white streak: if Sir William had anything to communicate, he touched the diamond in the middle.

These belts are also the records of former transactions, and being worked in particular forms, are easily deciphered by the Indians, and referred to in every treaty with the white people. When a string or belt of wampum is returned, it is a proof that the proposed treaty is not accepted and the negotiation is at an end.

But to return from this digression: When the pipe has gone round, a sweating house is prepared with six long poles fixed in the ground and pointed at the top. It is then covered with skins and blankets to exclude the air, and the area of the house will contain only three persons. The person to be adopted is then stripped naked, and enters the hut with two chiefs. Two large stones made red-hot are brought in and thrown on the ground; water is then brought in a bark dish and sprinkled on the stones with cedar branches, the steam arising from which puts the person into a most profuse perspiration, and opens the pores to receive the other part of the ceremony.

When the perspiration is at the height, he quits the house and jumps into the water. Immediately on coming out a blanket is thrown over him and he is led to the chief's hut, where

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he undergoes the following operation: Being extended on his back, the chief draws the figure he intends to make with a pointed stick, dipped in water in which gunpowder has been dissolved; after which, with ten needles dipped in vermilion, and fixed in a small wooden frame, he pricks the delineated parts, and where the bolder outlines occur he incises the flesh with a gun-flint. The vacant spaces, or those not marked with vermilion, are rubbed in with gunpowder, which produces the variety of red and blue; the wounds are then seared with punk-wood to prevent them from festering.

The operation, which is performed at intervals, lasts two or three days. Every morning the parts are washed with cold water in which is infused an herb called *Pockqueesegan*, which resembles English box, and is mixed by the Indians with the tobacco they smoke, to take off the strength. During the process, the war-songs are sung, accompanied by a rattle hung round with hawk-bells, called *chessaquoy*, which is kept shaking to stifle the groans such pains must naturally occasion. Upon the ceremony being completed, they give the party a name; that which they allotted to me, was *Amik*, or Beaver.

In return for the presents given me by Matchee Quewish, which I had only acknowledged by some trinkets, and to show how much I was pleased with the honor they had con-



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ferred on me, I resolved to add to my former gifts. I accordingly took the chiefs to a spot where I had directed my men to place the goods intended for them, and gave them scalping-knives, tomahawks, vermilion, tobacco, beads, etc., and lastly rum, the *unum necessarium* without which (whatever else had been bestowed on them) I should have incurred their serious displeasure. Our canoes being turned up, and the goods properly secured, I told the Canadians to keep a constant watch, night and day, while we were encamped. This precaution is absolutely necessary as the Indians generally do mischief when they are intoxicated. On this occasion our care was of infinite service, for with the rum we gave them they continued in a state of inebriety three days and nights, during which frolic they killed four of their own party; one of whom was a great chief, and was burnt by his son. Having been a famous warrior, he was buried with the usual honors peculiar to the savages, viz., a scalping-knife, tomahawk, beads, paint, etc., some pieces of wood to make a fire, and a bark cup to drink out of in his journey to the other country.

On the twenty-first we embarked, leaving the band extremely well satisfied with our conduct, which they acknowledged in the most expressive language; but as it was customary to take conductors from one lake to another, I engaged twenty of the Chippewas to accom-

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pany me in passing by land the Grande Côte de la Roche, which is the route that all the traders are obliged to take, on account of the great cataract, which is reckoned six hundred feet in height, at the entrance of the Nipigon River. This journey is extremely fatiguing to the men, who are obliged to ascend a steep hill with considerable burdens, and for this reason it is customary to rest two or three days to recruit their strength.

We left La Grande Côte de la Roche in good spirits, and continued our voyage to Lake Alemipigon, where we met another band of savages of the same nation. A council was held, and mutual presents exchanged. We stayed here ten days, encamped by the side of the lake, during which time a skirmish happened among the Indians, in which three men were killed and two wounded, after a dreadful scene of riot and confusion, occasioned by the baneful effects of rum.

Lake Alemipigon, or Nipigon, is about 100 miles in length, and supplies the savages with great quantities of fish. The land affords abundance of wild roots, and the animals are very numerous. The Indians who hunt here are in number about 300, and are remarkably wild and superstitious.

On the first of August we departed with fifteen Indians, not only to serve as guides, but to assist us across the portages. We lived on animal food and roots, reserving our corn

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and hard grease for the winter. Every evening at sunset we encamped, and got into our canoes at break of day. We continued our march to Lac Eturgeon, or Sturgeon Lake, but did not stay there a sufficient time to enable me to give a particular account of it. I have, however, described it in the narrative of my journey to Lake Manontoye, where I encamped for three days on account of the badness of the weather.

On the twenty-fifth of September we arrived at Lac la Mort, or Dead Lake, situated to the northeast of Lake Alemipigon. This lake is about sixty miles in circumference, the land low and swampy, and the water very unpleasant to the palate. It has been much frequented by the Indians, for during the time I wintered there I discovered no less than thirty-five different roads, about three feet wide, leading from the woods to the lake side. It abounds with fish, and is frozen over in the winter, the ice not breaking away till April. The Indians who resort to it are good hunters, but very wild. The Chippewas are not so fond of dress as the other savages, particularly those tribes who live very remote from Michilimackinac. This is easily accounted for; as the ice remains almost to the last spring month in England, and the winter season begins early in the month of October, the intermediate time is employed in making and repairing canoes, taking short excursions for

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food, amusing themselves in swimming and other pastimes peculiar to the savages. The luxury of dress can be little regarded by those whose constant necessities require the utmost exertions for their daily supply, and who are not provident enough to lay up a store of provisions for winter. Indians in general are extremely indolent, from the wildest to the most civilized, and value themselves upon being so, conceiving it beneath the dignity of a warrior to labor, and that all domestic cares and concerns are the province of women alone. This aversion for labor does not arise from dread, or dislike of fatigue; on the contrary, no people encounter or endure it with more cheerfulness, particularly in their amusements, which are of various kinds, and many of them violent and laborious. They are calculated to make them athletic, and at the same time by the profuse perspiration which they occasion, they render the joints supple, and enable them to hunt with more facility.

Playing at ball, which is a favorite game, is very fatiguing. The ball is about the size of a cricket ball, made of deer skin and stuffed with hair; this is driven forwards and backwards with short sticks, about two feet long, and broad at the end like a bat, worked like a racket, but with larger interstices. By this the ball is impelled, and from the elasticity of the racket, which is composed of deer's sinews, is thrown to a great distance. The game is

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played by two parties, and the contest lies in intercepting each other, and striking the ball into a goal, at the distance of about four hundred yards, at the extremity of which are placed two high poles, about the width of a wicket from each other. The victory consists in driving the ball between the poles. The Indians play with great good humor and even when one of them happens, in the heat of the game, to strike another with his stick, it is not resented. But these accidents are cautiously avoided, as the violence with which they strike has been known to break an arm or a leg.

*Athtergain*, or miss-none-but-catch-all, is also a favorite amusement with them, in which the women frequently take a part. It is played with a number of hard beans, black and white, one of which has small spots and is called the king. They are put into a shallow wooden bowl, and shaken alternately by each party, who sit on the ground opposite to one another; whoever is dexterous enough to make the spotted bean jump out of the bowl, receives of the adverse party as many beans as there are spots. The rest of the beans do not count for anything.

The boys are very expert at trundling a hoop, particularly the Cahnuaga Indians, whom I have frequently seen excel at this amusement. The game is played by any number of boys who may accidentally assemble together, some driving the hoop, while others

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with bows and arrows shoot at it. At this exercise they are surprisingly expert, and will stop the progress of the hoop when going with great velocity, by driving the pointed arrow into its edge; this they will do at a considerable distance, and on horseback as well as on foot. They will also kill small birds at fifty yards' distance, and strike a half-penny off a stick at fifteen yards. Spears and tomahawks they manage with equal dexterity.

## Chapter 8

### THE WINTER AT LAC LA MORT: ENCOUNTER WITH THE NATIVES

THE fatigue my Canadians had undergone rendered it necessary to prepare for wintering and induced me to settle at Lac la Mort. The weather was also setting in cold, and threatened to be very severe, which was an additional motive. Having refreshed ourselves and secured the canoes, I took two Indians to show me a spot proper for building upon. We fixed close to the lake side, where we erected a loghouse, thirty feet long and twenty feet wide, divided into two apartments, into which we deposited our goods. The next concern was to conceal our canoes in the woods and to hide the rum under ground, except a small quantity for immediate use, knowing by experience the necessity of keeping it from the Indians, as our safety so essentially depended on it.

Having arranged every domestic concern, and spread our table in the wilderness, we prepared our winter firing, as wood is very difficult to bring home in severe weather. At leisure times we hunted, to increase our stock of provisions, which would not have been sufficient to support our household, and not

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choosing to risk the uncertainty of the arrival of savages, who sometimes bring animal food to the traders.

As the snow began to fall very heavy, we were prevented from making long excursions without using snowshoes. For the space of a fortnight we hunted with great success and caught a number of small animals, on which we feasted daily; these proved a seasonable relief, and saved the corn and grease. We had been settled about three weeks when a large band of savages arrived. Having only eight Canadians with me, I desired them to act with the utmost precaution as our number was comparatively small, and in case of a drunken frolic the property might be pillaged and our lives sacrificed. Fortunately for me I had very steady men, who were well accustomed to the Northwest Indians. We were mutually pleased with each other, as no trader had wintered there before. The great chief, whose name was *Kesconeek*, made me a present of skins, dried meat, fish, and wild oats, a civility which I returned without delay and in a manner with which he seemed highly gratified. The rest of the savages then came into my house one by one, which is called Indian file, singing war songs, and dancing. All of them except the chief placed themselves on the ground. He, standing upright with great dignity in the center of the tribe, delivered the following speech: "*Angaymem Nocey wa haguamissey*



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*kaygo arwayyor kee zargetoone oway barhtyage Nishinnorbay nogome cawwickca kitchee Artaway winnin, kitchee morgussey cargoneek neennerwind zargetoone artaway neennerwind debwoye Nocey barhtyage meekintargan omar appeemeenequy mackquah amik warbeshance menoach kegonce."*

"It is true, Father, I and my young men are happy to see you; as the great Master of Life has sent a trader to take pity on us savages we shall use our best endeavors to hunt and bring you wherewithal to satisfy you in furs, skins, and animal food."

This speech was in fact intended to induce me to make them further presents. I indulged them in their expectations by giving them two kegs of rum of eight gallons each, lowered with a small proportion of water, according to the usual custom adopted by all traders, five carrots of tobacco, fifty scalping-knives, gun-flints, powder, shot, ball, and so forth. To the women I gave beads, trinkets, and so forth. And to eight chiefs who were in the band, each a Northwest gun, a calico shirt, a scalping-knife of the best sort, and an additional quantity of ammunition. These were received with a full *yo-hah*, or demonstration of joy.

The women, who are on all occasions slaves to their husbands, were ordered to make up bark huts, which they completed in about an hour, and everything was got in order for

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merriment. The rum being taken from my house, was carried to their wigwam and they began to drink. The frolic lasted four days and nights, and notwithstanding all our precaution (securing their guns, knives, and tomahawks) two boys were killed and six men wounded by three Indian women. One of the chiefs was also murdered, which reduced me to the necessity of giving several articles to bury with him, to complete the usual ceremony of their interment. These frolics are very prejudicial to all parties, and put the trader to a considerable expense, which nevertheless he cannot with safety refuse. On the fifth day they were all sober, and expressed great sorrow for their conduct, lamenting bitterly the loss of their friends.

On the twenty-sixth of October they departed for the hunt, which gave us great satisfaction, as we had scarcely rested during their abode with us. When they got into their canoes they sang the dead war song:—*“Wabindam, Kitchee Manitoo, haguarmissey hapitch neatissum,”* or, “Master of Life, view me well, you have given me courage to open my veins.”

Having piled the winter’s firing at a convenient distance from the house to prevent accidents, we prepared the nets for fishing. The ice was three feet thick, and the snow very deep; this we were obliged to clear away, before we could cut holes in which to put our

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nets. For the space of two months we had uncommon success, having caught about eighteen thousand weight of fish, which we hung up by the tails across sticks to freeze, and then laid them up for store. This was to us an important acquisition, as fishing in the middle of winter is precarious, and the return of the Indians to supply the wants of the trader very uncertain.

In summer the fishers go up the lakes, as well as rivers, and are generally most successful at the foot of a deep stream, or the mouth of a creek. In the beginning of winter they cut a large opening and set nets. In the depth of winter they make a small hole, in which they angle; and sometimes they cut two holes in a right line through the ice, and pass a line at the end of a stick from hole to hole, by which they haul the net under the ice, frequently with good success. In winter fishing is the daily employ of half the men, though in very severe weather it is a fatiguing service.

In the beginning of January, 1778, our provisions ran short, having nothing left but some spawn of fish, which we beat up with warm water and lived upon. The intense severity of the weather would not allow us to look after the nets; and although thus distressed for want of better food, we were obliged to stay at home, keeping a large fire, and lying almost continually on our blankets, which weakened us exceedingly. Having remained in this in-

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active state for some time, and hunger pressing hard, I roused myself and proposed to my men to make marten traps, which they went about with the utmost cheerfulness. When they had finished a sufficient number, they set them in the woods, at the distance of about two miles from the house. While they were employed in this service I was left alone, it being necessary for someone to remain in case of the arrival of savages. The first day my men were successful, and returned with two raccoons, three hares, and four musquashes. On these we feasted the next day, and though we were not satisfied, they proved a seasonable relief and enabled us to pursue the business we were engaged in with greater spirits, fondly expecting more prosperous days.

In a little time we were again destitute and the men became disheartened. This induced me to propose a journey to Lake Manontoye, where we knew Mr. Shaw, a brother trader, had wintered, to endeavor to procure some wild rice, which the Indians told me grew in the swamps at that place. The Canadians approved of the plan, and said they hoped they should be able to provide for their subsistence till my return. Previous to my departure we were compelled to kill a favorite dog, belonging to Joseph Boneau, one of my people, which most sensibly affected us, because independent of the attachment we had

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towards him, he was a very useful animal. The next morning I put on my snowshoes and persuaded an Indian and his wife who were with me occasionally, and had accidentally come in from the hunt with six hares, to accompany me, promising them payment in rum at my return. They agreed to go, and it was very fortunate they did, as I could not have found the way without a guide.

We set off with the six hares, and traveled four days without killing anything. This was a disappointment, but with the little stock we carried with us we subsisted tolerably well. About an hour before sunset on the fourth day we stopped at a small creek, which was too deep to be forded, and whilst the Indian was assisting me in making a raft to cross over, rather than swim through in such cold weather against a strong current, I looked round, and missed his wife. I was rather displeased, as the sun was near setting and I was anxious to gain the opposite shore, to encamp before dark. I asked the Indian where she was gone; he smiled, and told me he supposed into the woods to set a collar for a partridge. In about an hour she returned with a newborn infant in her arms, and coming up to me, said in Chippewa, "*Oway Saggonash Payshik Shomagonish*," or, "Here, Englishman, is a young warrior." It is said that the Indian women bring forth children with very little pain, but I believe it is merely an opinion. It is true they

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are strong and hardy, and will support fatigue to the moment of their delivery; but this does not prove they are exempt from the common feelings of the sex on such trying occasions. A young woman of the Rat nation has been known to be in labor a day and a night without a groan. The force of example, acting upon their pride, will not allow these poor creatures to betray a weakness or express the pain they feel, probably lest the husband should think her unworthy of his future attention, and despise both mother and child. At any rate he would tell her the infant, if a boy, would never be a warrior: and if a girl, would have a dastardly spirit, and of course neither of them be fit for a savage life.

I believe it will not be disputed that the Indian women love their children with as much affection as parents in the most civilized states can boast. Many proofs might be adduced to support this assertion. A mother suckles her child till it attains the age of four or five years, and sometimes till it is six or seven. From their infant state they endeavor to promote an independent spirit. They are never known either to beat or scold them, lest the martial disposition which is to adorn their future life and character should be weakened; on all occasions they avoid everything compulsive, that the freedom with which they wish them to think and act may not be controlled. If they die, they lament their death

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with unfeigned tears, and even for months after their decease will weep at the graves of their departed children. The nation of savages called *Biscatonges*, or by the French, *Pleureurs*, are said to weep more bitterly at the birth of a child than at its decease, because they look upon death only as a journey from whence he will return, but with regard to his birth, they consider it as an entrance into a life of perils and misfortunes.

As soon as a child is born, if in summer, the mother goes into the water and immerses the infant. As soon as this is done, it is wrapped up in a small blanket and tied to a flat board, covered with dry moss, in the form of the bottom of a coffin, with a hoop over the top where the head lies, to preserve it from injury. In winter it is clad in skins as well as blankets. In the heat of summer gauze is thrown over the young savage to keep off the mosquitoes, which are very troublesome in the woods. The board on which the child is placed is slung to the mother's forehead with a broad worsted belt, and rests against her back.

When the French took possession of Canada the women had neither linen nor swaddling clothes. All their child-bed furniture consisted of a kind of trough, filled with dry rotten wood dust, which is as soft as the finest down and well calculated to imbibe the moisture of the infant. On this the child was placed, covered with rich furs, and tied down with

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strong leather strings. The dust was changed as often as necessary till the child was weaned.

Among the Indians who are in any degree civilized, the women feed their children with pap made of Indian corn and milk, if it can be obtained, but in the parts more northern and remote from Europeans, wild rice and oats are substituted, which being cleansed from the husk and pounded between two stones, are boiled in water with maple sugar. This food is reckoned very nourishing, and with broth made from the flesh of animals and fish, which they are frequently able to procure, cannot fail of supporting and strengthening the infant. Among several of the tribes of Indians pap is made of sagavite, from a root they call toquo, of the bramble kind. This is washed and dried, afterward ground or pounded and made into a paste, which being baked is pleasant to the taste, but of a very astringent quality. It is their common bread.

On our arrival at Lac Eturgeon, as the weather was bad, we encamped three days, which gave me an opportunity of making some observations on this lake, which I could not do when I passed it in my way to Lac la Mort.

This lake, by the Indian accounts, is about five days' journey by water; the width in some parts is about thirty miles. There are a number of small islands in it which abound with hares, partridges, and wild fowl. The Indians who frequent it are Hawoyzask, or



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Musquash, who speak the Chippewa language. They are usually more stationary than the generality of the Chippewas; they seldom leave the inlands, and are excellent hunters. Mr. Carver, in his chart, points out a village leading to Rivière St. Croix, which he says belongs to the roving Chippewas; but I believe all the nation, with very few exceptions, may be called rovers, in the strictest sense of the word.

The first day of our encampment we killed a hare, made fish-hooks of the thigh bones, and baited them with the flesh. The lines were made of the bark of the willow tree, cut into slips and twisted hard together. Success crowned our endeavors, for we not only caught sufficient for present use, but enough for the remainder of the journey to Lake Manontoye.

The day before our arrival we killed two otters, which I intended as a present to Mr. Shaw, not doubting but any animal food would be acceptable from the severity of the season, concluding that his situation was as bad as our own, except in the article of wild oats. When [we] arrived within six miles of the lake we met a small party of Indians, who alarmed us by an account of a dreadful confusion among their tribe, occasioned by the Hudson Bay savages having killed three of their band; and they said they believed Mr. Shaw had fallen a sacrifice to their fury, as they had heard them consult together to plunder the trader.

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They lamented exceedingly their inability to assist him, not being even strong enough to resent their own personal injury. However, they promised to accompany me on the way, as near to Mr. Shaw's house as their safety would admit.

Having taken refreshment, we pursued our journey till within two miles of the house, when they thought it prudent to leave me, and wishing me success, retired into the woods, out of the track, to avoid being seen, where they promised to stay till my return. My Indian and his wife did not choose to proceed any farther, being also afraid of the Hudson Bay savages. I confess my situation was very unpleasant, and I debated in my mind what steps to take to attempt the relief of a brother trader, and at the same time avoid injury myself. Relying on my usual success in suppressing these kind of tumults occasioned by intoxication, and conscious that I knew as well as any man the nature of the Indians when under its pernicious influence, I did not doubt, however unsuccessful my endeavors might prove as to rescuing Mr. Shaw from his perilous situation, but that I should certainly be able to effect an escape myself in case of an attack; and as one favorable suggestion frequently gives birth to another, and establishes by degrees a confidence in the mind, I anticipated Mr. Shaw's delivery to my entire satisfaction. Fortified by these flattering hopes, I deter-

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mined to exert my best and speediest endeavors in his behalf, and pursued my journey without delay. When I arrived within a quarter of a mile of the scene of discord, I heard the war-whoop in a manner very loud and clamorous; and though I had been accustomed to such sounds, I was very much alarmed and felt my resolution rather staggered, sensible that the rage of drunken Indians, when it has risen to a certain pitch, knows no bounds, and of the extreme difficulty of reconciling them to any person to whom they had unfortunately taken a dislike. Animated, however, with the idea of behaving like a warrior, and recurring to the time when I was adopted at Pays Plat, I conceived it unmanly to shrink from danger, and pushing through the woods, had soon a full view of the infernal spirits, for I could give them no better name.

I lay some minutes in ambush, listening with great attention, till I heard one of them cry out in the Chippewa language, "*Haguarmissey mornooch gunnisar Chushecance*"; or, "I do not mean to kill the Cat"; which was a name given to Mr. Shaw by the Indians, from his speaking in a feeble voice. This convinced me he was alive, though in imminent danger. I made all possible haste up to the house, and found the savages, both men and women, completely drunk. The huts had been knocked down, the canoes [set] adrift, and the whole formed the most dreadful scene of confusion

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I had ever beheld. There were also an old Indian and a woman, whom I afterwards learned was his mother, lying dead upon the snow by the lake-side. I made several efforts to get into the house, but was prevented by the savages, who kept me back, kissing me and telling me they loved me, but that I must not attempt to relieve the Cat. At last, with inconceivable difficulty, I persuaded them to attend to me, and felt the most extreme satisfaction in having succeeded, at least so far, in an attempt which would have been dangerous to anyone to have undertaken who was not fully master of the language and character of the savages, and at the same time cool and dispassionate enough to hear their nonsense with patience and temper.

I then addressed myself to the most sober of the chiefs, and inquired of him the cause of the dispute. He told me Mr. Shaw was a dog instead of a cat, for that he had refused them rum; and that though he and the rest of the tribe were happy to see me, because they had heard I always had a good heart towards the savages, I should not go in to assist the trader, for they were the masters of the wigwam, and not he, and that they were resolved to have all the rum in his possession before break of day.

Mr. Shaw's house might very properly be styled a fort, being secured by high pickets, which made it difficult for the Indians to approach it, and he had taken the precaution

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to fasten the outer gate as well as the door. I told the chief it was not my intention to interfere, that I had passed accidentally in my way to Lac le Rouge, and should only stay to refresh myself. This information pleased him exceedingly, as he knew Mr. Shaw had only one man in the house, the rest, with the interpreter, being out in search of provisions, so that at my departure there would not remain force sufficient to obstruct their proceedings. I perceived them so fully bent on accomplishing their purpose, that had I betrayed the least intention or inclination to relieve the unhappy man I should most probably have been dispatched without much ceremony. The effects of the rum they had already drunk had so elevated their spirits that nothing less than the full possession of the whole stock would satisfy them; and I am persuaded that if half of them had perished, the rest would without hesitation have risked their lives in the attempt. To avoid all suspicion, which would probably have been fatal both to Mr. Shaw and myself, I left the chief and watched an opportunity of returning undiscovered. Fortunately the Indians had not drunk all the rum Mr. Shaw had given them, and the chief, as soon as I had left him, went back to his hut to increase his intoxication and communicate the conversation which [had] passed between us, the rest of the band having retired soon after the conference began.

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Observing the coast clear, I walked unobserved to the fort, and spoke loudly both in French and English. Mr. Shaw and his man heard me, and recollecting my voice, were transported beyond measure. The man, who was a Canadian, was most delighted, as his fears were very strong, it being the first year he had wintered among the savages. On my approach I heard him cry out with the greatest vehemence, "*Mon Dieu! que je suis content! Notre ami est arrivé, autrement nous serions foutu. Je conte assurément, que nous serons bientôt libre, mon cher bourgeois.*" He instantly opened the gate. I entered precipitately, and congratulated him on the prospect of counteracting the designs of the Indians, being resolved to exert my best endeavors and to live or die with them. Mr. Shaw thanked me for my professions of friendship, and immediately gave me a concise account of the disturbance. He said the Hudson Bay Indians had come to him with very little peltry, and after trading for it he had given them more rum than they had any right to expect; that instead of being content with this they insisted on more; that in a fit of intoxication they had killed an Indian and his mother; and had attempted to set fire to his house with punk-wood, which they shot at it lighted, fixed to the points of arrows. Having heard his story, I encouraged him to keep up his spirits, and advised him, when the Indians returned to execute

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their purpose, to appear indifferent to their menaces.

Whilst we were in deep discourse, I discovered three chiefs at a small distance from the house, in very earnest conversation, and was convinced they were devising some scheme to effect their design. As they approached I called to them, and desired them to come into the house. They immediately advanced, and walked in one by one, with looks of treachery which the earnestness of the business to be executed would not allow them to conceal. I talked to them without the least reserve, and in apparent good temper. I asked them if they were sober, but before they could give me an answer the rest of the band came to the door, but did not enter; the head chief then told me they were very sober and expressed great concern for their conduct, but that now the strong water had lost its influence they saw their folly, and were sure the bad spirit had left their hearts.

I told them the Master of Life was angry with them, and that they did not deserve success in hunting, for their bad behavior to the trader, who had been a kind father to them and supplied all their wants. I then presented them with some tobacco to smoke in council, which was well received, and looking earnestly at the chief, addressed the band to the following effect:

*“Keennerwind Ojemar woke, kee wabindan*

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*indenendum kee kee noneydone Kitchee Manni-  
too, ojeý candan opin weene aighter ojeý petoone  
nowwetting guyack debarchemon kaygait nin  
oathty hepadgey nee woke keennerwind equoy  
kee janis goyer metach nogome gudderbarchemon  
hunjyta O, nishshishshin artawway winnin  
kaygait nee zargetoome artawway winnin metach  
kakaygo arwayyor Matchee Mannitoo, guyyack  
neennerwind oathty mornooch kee appay omar  
neegee."*

"You chiefs, and others of the tribe whose eyes are open, I hope you will give ear to the words of my mouth. The Master of Life has opened my brain and made my breath blow good words. My heart feels for you, your wives, and children; and what I now speak proceeds from the root of my friend's sentiments, who owns this house, and who has told me that his heart was opened to you on your arrival; but notwithstanding his kindness the bad spirit got possession of you, which made him very unhappy, though he hoped the Master of Life would change your dispositions and make you good Indians, as you used to be."

To this speech one of the chiefs made answer:

*"Kaygait Amik, kee aighter annaboycassey  
omar hapadgey: O, nishshishshin kee debar-  
chemon nogome neennerwind ojeý stootewar  
cockinnor nee doskeennerwaymug kee debwoye  
neecarnis hapadgey sannegat neennerwind ha  
nishinnorbay kaygwotch annaboycassey ozome*



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*Scuttaywabo ojey minniquy neennerwind angaymer Amik, shashyyea suggermarsh cockinnor nogome mornooch toworch payshik muccuk Scuttaywabo ojey bockettynan Cushshecance warbunk keejayp neennerwind ojey boossin;—haw, haw, haw.”*

“It is true, Beaver, you have strong sense; it sweetens your words to us, and we all understand you. We know, friend, your lips open with truth. It is very hard for us Indians, who have not the sense of the white people, to know when we have enough of the strong fiery water; but we hope the Cat will throw off the film from his heart, as ours are clear. We also hope he will open his heart once more and give us a small keg of the strong water to drink to the health of our brother and sister, whom we have sent to the far country, and tomorrow at break of day we will depart.”

Mr. Shaw, by my advice, promised to comply with their request, on condition of their being true to their engagements, and that they should forbear even tasting the rum while they remained on the ground. This determination I acquainted them with and they retired to their huts, leaving us in quiet possession of the fort.

The Indians remained quiet all night, which induced me to hope that my promise of rum to them, on their departure, had accomplished the desired effect: but I flattered myself too much, as the storm was not yet even at the

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height. At break of day they assembled and asked for the rum, which was immediately given them, and they got into their canoes and went off without burying their dead. This, being very uncusomary, alarmed me, as no people are more particular in paying the greatest respect to the remains of the deceased. Suspecting the bad spirit was still in them, and that they were only gone a short distance to drink the rum, we prepared for an attack, loading twenty-eight Northwest guns and a brace of pistols, and sat down by the fire expecting their return to complete the design my fortunate arrival had hitherto prevented. In about an hour they returned very much intoxicated, singing their dead war-songs, and every warrior naked, painted black from head to foot. As they approached the house in Indian file, each one repeated the following words: "*Mornooch toworch gunnesar cushshe-cance neennerwind oje dependan O wakaygan*"; or, "Nevertheless we do not mean to kill the Cat, we only own this fort and all that is in it."

Whilst they were singing, we were preparing our guns and placing them so as to be ready for immediate use if necessary, being determined to make a vigorous resistance, although there remained only Mr. Shaw and myself, the Canadian having fled to the woods.

I assumed the character of commander-in-chief, and desired Mr. Shaw to obey my orders implicitly, and by no means to fire till I gave

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the signal, well knowing that the death of one of the savages, even in our own defense, would so exasperate the rest that there would not be a possibility of escaping their fury. As our situation was truly critical, we acted with as much coolness as men devoted to destruction would. A fortunate thought came into my head, which I instantly put in practice. I went into the store, and rolling a barrel of gunpowder into the outer room knocked out the head. I had scarcely finished it before the savages arrived, and advancing to the door, armed with spears and tomahawks, said to each other, "*Keen etam,*" or, "You go first." We stood ready to receive them, and gave them to understand we were not afraid of them. One of the band entered the house and I said to him sternly, "*Ha wa neyoe shema-gonish equoy kee tertennin marmo?*" or, "Who now among you old women is a brave soldier?" and immediately pointing my pistol cocked to the barrel of gunpowder, cried out with great emphasis, "*Cockinnor marmo neepoo nogome,*" or, "We will all die this day." On hearing these words they ran from the door, crying, "*Kitchee Mannitoo ojey petoone Amik O mush-kowar haguarmissey yang*"; or, "The Master of Life has given the Beaver great strength and courage." The women fled with the utmost precipitation, pushed their canoes into the water, and got off as fast as they could. The men, who before were intoxicated, became

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sober, and making as much haste as possible, paddled to an island opposite the house. Soon after a canoe came on shore with six women to endeavor to make up the breach; but I refused all reconciliation, telling them that they might have known me before; that my name was Beaver; that all the Indians knew me to be a warrior; and that my heart was not easily melted. The women immediately returned, carrying with them the dead, which satisfied me they did not intend to trouble us again.

Thus by a happy presence of mind, we were saved from almost inevitable destruction, and probably from ending our lives under the most excruciating torture.

It may not be improper to observe the necessity there is for a trader to be cool, firm, and in case of emergency brave, but not rash or hasty. The Indians are just observers of the human mind, and easily discover true from affected courage, by that apparent tranquillity which clearly distinguishes the former from the latter. It is well known that no people in the world put courage to so severe a trial, and watch at the execution of their enemies with such savage curiosity the effect of the tortures they inflict. Even the women exult in proportion to the agony betrayed by the unhappy sufferer, though it frequently happens, through the same spirit operating on both parties, that the most excruciating torments cannot extort

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a sigh. An example or two from Mr. Adair's *History of the American Indians* will show the firmness of an Indian mind, and prove beyond a doubt that such anecdotes are not exaggerated. Truth should be the standard of history, and guide the pen of every author who values his reputation.

Some years ago the Shawano Indians, being obliged to remove from their habitations, in their way took a Muskohge warrior known by the name of old *Scrany*, prisoner; they bastinadoed him severely, and condemned him to the fiery torture. He underwent a great deal without showing any concern; his countenance and behavior were as if he suffered not the least pain. He told his persecutors, with a bold voice, that he was a warrior; that he had gained most of his martial reputation at the expense of their nation, and was desirous of showing them, in the act of dying, that he was still as much their superior as when he headed his gallant countrymen against them; that although he had fallen into their hands, and forfeited the protection of the divine power by some impurity or other, when carrying the holy ark of war against his devoted enemies, yet he had so much remaining virtue as would enable him to punish himself more exquisitely than all their despicable, ignorant crowd possibly could; and that he would do so, if they gave him liberty by untying him, and handing him one of the red-hot gun-barrels

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out of the fire. The proposal and the mode of his address appeared so exceedingly bold and uncommon that his request was granted. Then, suddenly seizing one end of the red-hot barrel and brandishing it from side to side, he forced his way through the armed and surprised multitude, leaped down a prodigiously steep and high bank into a branch of the river, dived through it, ran over a small island, and passed the other branch, amidst a shower of bullets; and though numbers of his enemies were in close pursuit of him, he got into a bramble swamp, through which, though naked and in a mangled condition, he reached his own country.

The Shawano Indians also captured a warrior of the Anantoocah nation, and put him to the stake, according to their usual cruel solemnities. Having unconcernedly suffered much torture, he told them, with scorn, they did not know how to punish a noted enemy; therefore, he was willing to teach them, and would confirm the truth of his assertion if they allowed him the opportunity. Accordingly he requested of them a pipe and some tobacco, which was given him. As soon as he had lighted it, he sat down, naked as he was, on the women's burning torches that were in his circle, and continued smoking his pipe without the least discomposure. On this a head warrior leaped up, and said they saw plainly enough that he was a warrior and not

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afraid of dying, nor should he have died, only that he was both spoiled by the fire, and devoted to it by their laws; however, though he was a very dangerous enemy and his nation a treacherous people, it should be seen that they paid a regard to bravery, even in one who was marked with war-streaks at the cost of many of the lives of their beloved kindred; and then, by way of favor, he with his friendly tomahawk instantly put an end to all his pains. Though the merciful but bloody instrument was ready some minutes before it gave the blow, yet I was assured the spectators could not perceive the sufferer to change either his posture or his steadiness of countenance in the least.

Death among the Indians, in many situations, is rather courted than dreaded, and particularly at an advanced period of life, when they have not strength or activity to hunt. The father then solicits to change his climate, and the son cheerfully acts the part of an executioner, putting a period to his parent's existence.

Among the northern Chippewas, when the father of a family seems reluctant to comply with the usual custom and his life becomes burdensome to himself and friends, and his children are obliged to maintain him with the labor of their hands, they propose to him the alternative, either to be put on shore on some island, with a small canoe and paddles, bows and arrows, and a bowl to drink out of, and

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there run the risk of starving, or to suffer death according to the laws of the nation, manfully. As there are few instances where the latter is not preferred, I shall relate the ceremony practiced on such an occasion.

A sweating-house is prepared in the same form as at the ceremony of adoption, and whilst the person is under this preparatory trial, the family are rejoicing that the Master of Life has communicated to them the knowledge of disposing of the aged and infirm, and sending them to a better country, where they will be renovated and hunt again with all the vigor of youth. They then smoke the pipe of peace, and have their dog feast. They also sing the grand medicine song, as follows:

*“Wa haguarmissey Kitchee Mannitoo kaygait cockinor nishinnorbay ojey kee candan hepadgey kee zargetoone nishinnorbay mornooch kee tarpenan nocey keen aighter, O, dependan nishinnorbay, mornooch towwarch weene ojey mishcoot pockcan tunnockay,”* “The Master of Life gives courage. It is true, all Indians know that he loves us, and we now give our father to him, that he may find himself young in another country and be able to hunt.”

The songs and dances are renewed, and the eldest son gives his father the death stroke with a tomahawk. They then take the body, which they paint in the best manner and bury it with the war weapons, making a bark



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hut to cover the grave, to prevent the wild animals from disturbing it.

Thus do the unenlightened part of mankind assume a privilege of depriving each other of life, when it can no longer be supported by the labor of their own hands, and think it a duty to put a period to the existence of those to whom they are indebted for their own, and employ those arms to give the fatal stroke, which in more civilized countries would have been exerted for their support.

I remained with Mr. Shaw until the return of his men, and took an Indian sleigh loaded with wild rice and dried meat, and two of his Canadians to assist me. In my way I called at the place where I [had] left the Indians, who [had] communicated to me the first account of the tumult at Mr. Shaw's, but they were gone. My Indian and his wife waited for me, and were rejoiced to see me again. On my return to Lac la Mort I found all my men in good health and spirits, having been well supplied with provisions by the savages during my absence, and had increased my stock of peltry by barter. Mr. Shaw's men rested at my house one night, and the next morning set off for [Lake] Manontoye.

## Chapter 9

### FURTHER PROCEEDINGS AT LAC LA MORT

**L**AKE MANONTOYE, where Mr. Shaw wintered, is not as large as Lac Eturgeon. It abounds with excellent fish and wild fowl, and oats, rice, and cranberries grow spontaneously in the swamps. There are very few islands in it. There are about 300 of the Chippewa nation who resort to it. They are very wild and delight in war, which they sometimes wage against the Sioux on the Mississippi; and they are frequently absent from their families fifteen months, scarce ever returning without a prisoner or a scalp.

It is very strange that the thirst of blood should stimulate the human mind to traverse such an amazing extent of country, suffering inexpressible hardships and uncertain of success, to gratify a passion which none but an infernal spirit could suggest; and when success has crowned his labors, that he should return with inconceivable satisfaction and relate the transactions of his journey with the greatest exultation, smiling at the relation of agonies which he alone [has] occasioned. The most dreadful acts of a maniac cannot exceed such cruelty: happy those who enjoy the benefits of society, whose civilization and

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whose laws protect them from such detestable outrages!

Previous to their going to war the head chief calls a council, and each chief has a belt of wampum and a war pipe: the belt to remind them of former transactions relative to the nation they intend to commence hostilities against, and the pipe to smoke at the council fire. When they have determined to make war, they send the belts and pipes to their enemies, and if a similar compliment is returned they instantly prepare for blood, with the most steady and determined resolution.

The novel of *Emily Montague*<sup>36</sup> affords a striking example of this strong propensity for blood, which I shall relate in the author's own words:

"A Jesuit missionary told me a story on this subject, which one cannot hear without horror. An Indian woman with whom he lived on his mission, was feeding her children, when her husband brought in an English prisoner. She immediately cut off his arm,

<sup>36</sup>The author of this novel was Mrs. Frances M. Brooke, an industrious eighteenth-century writer of fiction and drama. Soon after her marriage she came to Canada with her husband, who was appointed chaplain to the garrison at Quebec. In 1763 Mrs. Brooke published anonymously *The History of Lady Julia Mandeville*, a novel of Canadian life which proved a great success and ran through several editions. In 1769 she returned to this field with the four-volume novel, *Emily Montague*, to which Long makes allusion.

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and gave her children the streaming blood to drink. The Jesuit remonstrated on the cruelty of the action; on which, looking sternly at him—‘I would have them warriors,’ said she, ‘and therefore feed them with the food of men.’”

When I was at Cataraqui, the capital of the Loyalist settlements in Canada, a party of Mohawks and Messesawgers accidentally met, and having bartered their skins and peltry with the traders, sat themselves down to drink the rum their merchandise had produced. As the liquor began to operate, their imaginations suggested to them that they were of different nations and as the Mohawks always claimed a superiority, intoxication made them proud. At last a dispute arose, and a Messesawger Indian was killed and his heart taken out, which the Mohawks intended to have broiled, but they were prevented by a gentleman who accidentally passed by their hut, and prevailed upon them to give it up.

It seems to be the constant attention, both of the male and female part of the Indians, to instill ideas of heroism into the minds of the rising generation, and these impressions they carry far beyond the line of reason or of justice. Is it then surprising that every action of their lives should tend to satisfy their thirst for revenging offenses committed against them, and that these sentiments should operate so powerfully in directing their future conduct?

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There is, nevertheless, one exception to these observations—their conduct to traders who are obliged on some occasions, when intoxication runs high, to beat them very soundly. To their credit, in these instances, I must confess I never knew them to resent this severity when sober. The only remark they have made has been, "Friend, you beat me very severely last night, but I do not mind, I suppose I deserved it. It was the liquor made me offend." Or if they betray any dissatisfaction, one glass of rum will reconcile all differences. With regard to severity when they are perfectly sober, I am convinced it would be highly dangerous, and should be cautiously avoided.

But although they often express these blood-thirsty sentiments, and too frequently put them in [to] execution, yet there are occasions when they exercise both temper and reason.

When I was at Pimitiscotyan Landing on Lake Ontario, I had a large dog to protect myself and property. An Indian came in rather in liquor to ask for rum, and probably might strike the animal. The dog instantly seized him by the calf of the leg, and wounded him dreadfully. He returned to his hut and made no complaint till the next morning, when he desired to speak with me. I went to him, and he told me how the dog had used him, saying he hoped I would give him a pair of leggings, to supply those which the dog had

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torn; but that with regard to his leg, he did not trouble himself much about that, as he knew it would soon be well. I immediately granted his request, and added a bottle of rum, with which he seemed well pleased, and I heard no more of it.

But to return to the subject of going to war. The women and children sometimes go forward in their canoes, singing the war-songs, and encamp every evening at sunset, having a great dislike to traveling in the dark. Forty-eight young warriors are placed, in four divisions, to keep guard at night armed with guns, bows, and arrows, and some scotté wigwas, or fire bark, to light in case of sudden surprise.

This bark is taken from the birch tree, and being properly dried is used by the Indians to light them to spear fish. It is fixed on a stick about seven feet long, and either put at the head of the canoe or carried by the person who attends upon the man that spears, and whose business it is also to steer the canoe.

At daybreak the Indians depart and pursue their journey regardless of the weather till they arrive in the enemy's country, when the utmost precaution is adopted that it is possible for human invention to suggest.

When war is made against the Mississippi Indians, they endeavor to kill the men and women and bring away the children to dispose of to the traders, who send them down to Montreal for servants. The boys are not so

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much to be depended upon as the girls, being more stubborn, and naturally disdaining the idea of slavery. They are also full of pride and resentment, and will not hesitate to kill their masters in order to gratify their revenge for a supposed injury. The girls are more docile, and assimilate much sooner with the manners of civilization. Being unaccustomed to domestic life, they are at first sick and unhealthy; but the change soon becomes familiar to them, and they then prefer it to the uncultivated manner of living in which they were brought up.

A few days after my return to Lac la Mort, a band of savages arrived from the Red Lake, called by the Indians, Misqui Sakiegan, and some from Lake Shabeechevan, or the Weed Lake, about five days' march beyond Lake Manontoye. Red Lake is so called on account of a remarkable circumstance which happened to two famous warriors of the Chippewa nation who were hunting by the lake-side, and as they were looking out for game, perceived at some distance an enormous beast that appeared much larger than any animal they had ever seen; his pace was slow and heavy, and he kept constantly\* by the water side. They followed him as close as they thought prudent, determined at all hazards to use their best endeavors to kill him. As they approached they had a clearer view, and discovered that his body was covered with something like

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moss. This increased their surprise, and after consulting together they continued advancing towards the beast, and fired large shot, without appearing to make any impression. They fired again with as little effect as before; then retreated some distance, sat down and sang war songs, addressing themselves to the Master of Life and desiring his assistance to enable them to conquer it, as they believed it to be the Matchee Mannitoo, or bad spirit, in the shape of this monster. Then they got up and pursued him, both firing at the same time. The shots proved successful and caused the animal to turn round, which induced them to keep up their fire till the beast jumped into the water and they lost sight of him. From the circumstance of his blood dyeing the water red, this lake has ever since been called the Red Lake.

Fish is caught here in great abundance, and wild rice grows in very great plenty in the swamps. The country likewise abounds with all sorts of animals for hunting. There are several rivers and falls of water on the north-west part. The Indians are very fond of fishing and hunting here during the winter season, as they are generally successful even in the most severe weather. From Red Lake to Lake le Sel, or Salt Lake, by the Indian accounts, there are fourteen short portages, and twenty-two creeks. Lake le Sel is very small, and the water shallow and muddy. It does not exceed



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three miles in length. There are few fish except eels, catfish, and pike, but it abounds with musquashes and wild fowl. From this lake to Lake Caribou, or Reindeer Lake, is eight days' march across five creeks and three portages.

Lake Caribou, or, in the Indian language, *Ateeque*, is about thirty miles long, with several small islands, resembling the Mille Isles in the River St. Lawrence above Montreal. The water is deep and clear, and the bottom hard. It abounds with large trout, whitefish, pickerel, pike, and sturgeon. It is surrounded by a chain of high mountains. Some years ago a French trader settled here, but of late it has been deserted. The Indians reckon it ten days' march to Lake Schabeechevan, across thirteen portages, and as many creeks; but as I wintered here the following year, though I went to it by a different track, I shall not describe it till I give an account of the occurrences of that time. From Lake Schabeechevan to Lake Arbitibis are three small lakes, eight creeks, and five portages. Lake Arbitibis is very large, and the surrounding land rocky and mountainous. This lake furnishes the Indians with fish and wild fowl. The aquatic race abound in this part of the world, doubtless so appointed for the support of the numerous tribes of savages who are obliged to resort to the lakes for food. At the northern extremity of this lake is a large fall of water, which flows from a river whose current is rapid for about twenty

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miles. On this river there are also dangerous rapids; the land upon its banks is low, and the beach sandy. From Lake Arbitibis to Crow's-nest Lake, called by the Indians, Cark Cark Sakiegan, is a short distance. The utmost circumference of Crow's-nest Lake scarcely exceeds two leagues, and [it] is only remarkable for a small island in the middle, with about forty high palm trees, where the crows build their nests, which is called Cark Cark Minnesey. The fish in this lake are very indifferent, being mostly of the sword-fish kind, which the Indians seldom eat. From this lake is a long portage, and about half way a high mountain. At the end of the carrying place is a river called Cark Cark Seepi, or Crow's River, which runs with a strong current for about thirty miles from Neeshshemaince Sakiegan, or the Lake of the Two Sisters, so called from the meeting of two currents, which form one grand discharge into the lake. The Hudson Bay Indians hunt here with great success. At the end is a carrying place about a quarter of a mile long that leads to a remarkably narrow river, which runs with a strong current for about fifty leagues. The land on each side, being very high, makes the navigation dark. The Indians in going up this river travel as light as possible to enable them to combat the strong current. The Hudson's Bay Company are supplied with a considerable quantity of peltry from this river.

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As the description of this country, hitherto so little explored, is a principal part of what I intended in this publication, I have described it either from my own knowledge or the most authentic information I was able to procure from the savages. In this respect I have followed Carver, who on his arrival at the Grand Portage met a party of Killistnoe and Assinipoil Indians, from whom he received accounts of several lakes and rivers, which he describes agreeably to the information he obtained.

It is necessary to observe that though the Indians are very expert in delineating countries upon bark with wood-coal mixed with bear's grease, and which even the women do with great precision, the length of a day's march is very uncertain and consequently cannot afford any geographical information. This remark, I trust, will be found to want no further proof than the consideration that their drafts consist principally of lakes and rivers, as they seldom travel much by land; and when their track overland is described, it is perhaps only a short portage which they cross in order again to pursue their journey on their favorite element. But as few persons will probably read this account with a view of going into this country, the description I have been able to give will be sufficient for the generality of my readers. I lament exceedingly my inability to make this work more perfect, but trust that it will

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be found highly useful to those whose avocations may induce them to have recourse to it for information and guidance in commercial pursuits. If an Indian goes with the stream, or against it, from sunrise to sunset, it is called a day's march. This uncertainty makes it very difficult for any one who travels as a trader to ascertain anything more than the Indian distance from one lake to another. As Mr. Carver, in his map, says that the branches which run from Rivière St. Louis, at the end of West Bay, in Lake Superior, are but little known, I can with equal propriety observe that those from Lake Alemipigon, or Nipigon, both east and west, are very difficult to describe geographically. The known candor of my countrymen will, I am persuaded, pardon any errors of this sort, as I can assure them I have exerted my best endeavors to render the description of places with respect to distances and situation as clear as possible, which the chart, I hope, will more fully explain.

## Chapter 10

### RETURN TO LAKE SUPERIOR

HAVING given an account of the different lakes, rivers, etc., from Lac la Mort, I shall continue the narrative from my return from Lake Manontoye, where I relieved Mr. Shaw.

A few days after, another band of savages arrived with skins, furs, and some provisions. They stayed with me two days, making merry with what rum I could spare them, without doing any mischief, and departed at last very peaceably. On the twenty-third of February another band came in, consisting of about eighty men, women, and children, who brought dried meats, oats, bear's grease, and eight packs of beaver, which I purchased, giving them rum as usual, with which they got intoxicated. In this frolic one woman was killed and a boy terribly burned. On the third day they departed, well pleased with their reception, leaving us plenty of provisions. The weather being more moderate, I sent my men to the lake to look after the nets, which had been under the ice a considerable time, the severity of the season not having allowed us to examine them for nearly a month, when to our great mortification they were found almost

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rotten, and not a single fish; but as one of the Canadians could make nets as well as myself, we repaired the damage, and caught plenty of fish to support us till April.

The severity of the season was sensibly felt by Mr. James Clark, belonging to the same company, who had five men starved at Lake Savan, a bad lake for fish, about 350 miles from my wintering ground, the Indians being obliged to hunt so far back in the woods that they could not give him any assistance; and from the concurrent accounts of the traders in the Northwest, as well as from the savages who resorted to my house, it was the hardest winter they ever remembered.

About this time a large band of Chippewas arrived, traded with me for their hunt, and finished their frolic in a peaceable manner. While this band was with me a curious circumstance occurred, which I shall relate.

One part of the religious superstition of the savages consists in each of them having his *totem*, or favorite spirit, which he believes watches over him. This totem, they conceive, assumes the shape of some beast or other, and therefore they never kill, hunt, or eat the animal whose form they think this totem bears.

The evening previous to the departure of the band, one of them, whose totem was a bear, dreamed that if he would go to a piece of swampy ground at the foot of a high mountain, about five days' march from my wigwam, he

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would see a large herd of elks, moose, and other animals; but that he must be accompanied by at least ten good hunters. When he awoke he acquainted the band with his dream and desired them to go with him: they all refused, saying it was out of their way, and that their hunting grounds were nearer. The Indian having a superstitious reverence for his dream (which ignorance and the prevalence of example among the savages carries to a great height), thinking himself obliged to do so, as his companions had refused to go with him, went alone, and coming near the spot, saw the animals he dreamed of. He instantly fired, and killed a bear. Shocked at the transaction, and dreading the displeasure of the Master of Life, whom he conceived he had highly offended, he fell down and lay senseless for some time. Recovering from his state of insensibility, he got up and was making the best of his way to my house when he was met in the road by another large bear, who pulled him down and scratched his face. The Indian, relating this event at his return, added, in the simplicity of his nature, that the bear asked him what could induce him to kill his totem; to which he replied that he did not know he was among the animals when he fired at the herd; that he was very sorry for the misfortune, and hoped he would have pity on him; that the bear suffered him to depart, told him to be more cautious in future, and acquaint all the

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Indians with the circumstance, that their totems might be safe and the Master of Life not angry with them. As he entered my house he looked at me very earnestly and pronounced these words: "*Amik, hunjey ta Kitchee Annascartisseyn nin, O Totem, cawwickanee wee geossay sannegat debwoye*"; or, "Beaver, my faith is lost, my totem is angry, I shall never be able to hunt any more."

This idea of destiny, or, if I may be allowed the phrase, "totemism," however strange, is not confined to the savages; many instances might be adduced from history to prove how strong these impressions have been on minds above the vulgar and unlearned. For instance one in the history of the private life of Louis XV, translated by Justamond: Among some particulars of the life of the famous Samuel Bernard, the Jew banker of the court of France, he says that he was superstitious as the people of his nation are, and had a black hen to which he thought his destiny was attached; he had the greatest care taken of her, and the loss of this fowl was, in fact, the period of his own existence, in January, 1739.

Dreams are particularly attended to by the Indians, and sometimes they make an artful use of the veneration that is paid to them, by which they carry a point they have in view. I shall relate an instance for the satisfaction of the reader.

Sir William Johnson, sitting in council with



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a party of Mohawks, the head chief told him he had dreamed last night that he had given him a fine laced coat, and he believed it was the same he then wore. Sir William smiled and asked the chief if he really dreamed it; the Indian immediately answered in the affirmative. "Well then," says Sir William, "you must have it"; and instantly pulled it off, and desiring the chief to strip himself, put on him the fine coat. The Indian was highly delighted and when the council broke up departed in great good humor, crying out, *who-ah*, which is an expression of great satisfaction among them.

The next council which was held, Sir William told the chief that he was not accustomed to dream, but that since he met him at the council he had dreamed a very surprising dream; the Indian wished to know it. Sir William, with some hesitation, told him he had dreamed that he had given him a tract of land on the Mohawk River to build a house on and make a settlement, extending about nine miles in length along the banks. The chief smiled and looking very cheerfully at Sir William told him if he really dreamed it he should have it; but that he would never dream again with him for he had only got a laced coat, whereas Sir William was now entitled to a large bed, on which his ancestors had frequently slept. Sir William took possession of the land by virtue of an Indian deed signed by the chiefs, and

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gave them some rum to finish the business. It is now a considerable estate, but since the war the Americans have deprived him of it, with all the buildings, etc., which are very valuable. It lies on the opposite shore to the German Flats, but the land is by no means equal in goodness with the soil there. Perhaps no part of America produces land better calculated for cultivation than the German Flats.

During the American war the best Loyalist troops were collected from the Mohawk River and it was agreed on all hands that for steadiness, bravery, and allegiance they were not to be excelled. Government has done its utmost to reward many of them for their services, by giving them land in Canada and Nova Scotia; and to those whom poverty obliged to solicit them, implements of husbandry. They are now in a very flourishing state, and there is no doubt but they will prove valuable friends and supporters of Great Britain in any future emergency.

During the severe weather I had a narrow escape from a contrivance of the Indian who was occasionally with me, and whom I employed in hunting and making marten traps. This was occasioned by jealousy on account of his wife, who was a pretty young squaw of the Rat nation, and whom he suspected of infidelity.

Being short of provisions and having only one faithful Canadian in the house, except the

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Indian and his wife, I desired him to make a number of marten traps and set them in two different roads, called a fork. Having finished about 200 and set them in the woods, baited with fish-heads, which these animals are very fond of, he returned and I gave him some rum for his trouble. Every day for a considerable time he went regularly to examine them, and when successful was always rewarded to his satisfaction. Having been unfortunate several days, I charged him with doing other business instead of examining the traps, to which he made no reply. I communicated my suspicions to my man and desired him to watch the savage. The next day the Canadian discovered him in the woods, dressing some partridges; when he returned home in the evening he asked for rum, which I refused, telling him he did not deserve any. This answer displeased him, and looking earnestly at me, he replied that I did not use him well; for though he had been unsuccessful with his traps, his trouble was the same; and that he generally found them out of order, which obliged him to set them right and employed him the whole next day. This excuse did not make any alteration in my conduct, and I told him the weather was too bad to get at any rum. He then began to imagine that I suspected him and knew of his laziness, and immediately opened his mind, telling me very frankly that he was jealous of me; and that

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his reason for not going to examine the marten traps was to prevent any communication between me and his wife, which, had he been far distant from home, might have been easily effected; and for this reason he kept near the house to watch her, knowing that she was fond of me; but that if I would give him some rum to drive away the bad spirit from his heart, he would endeavor to forget the injury I had done him.

Judging it prudent to remove his suspicions, I gave him two gallons of rum, a carrot of tobacco, a shirt, a pair of leggings, a scalping-knife, etc., and several articles to his wife. Having received the presents, he called her to drink with him and thank the trader with a cheerful heart for his great kindness. When they were a little merry he began to sing, and I heard him repeat these words: "*Mornooch Amik kee zargetoone mentimoyamish*," or, "I do not care though the Beaver loves my wife." This did not please me as I knew his jealousy would increase in proportion to the quantity of liquor he drank. However, I used the utmost precaution, securing his weapons to prevent his doing me any injury. His wife, hearing him repeat the words so frequently, began to be angry and pulled his hair and scratched his face. I thought this a favorable opportunity to express my dislike, and told him he was a fool to be jealous; that I gave him the rum to drive away the bad spirit,

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but it had [had] a contrary effect; that I never wanted anything of his wife but to make or mend snowshoes, and always paid her for her trouble. "Yes," cries the wife, "he is a fool, Beaver, and I will beat him"; which she instantly did, and cut his head with a glass bottle. I then interfered and parted them.

The moment I was gone he began the old song, and continued singing till he was sober; when, getting up, he came to me and said, "Beaver, I have seen the bad spirit in my dream, who told me that the trader had robbed me." Irritated at the expression, I told him his lips never spoke truth, and that he had no sense; and thinking it right to suppress this humor, beat him very severely. When he had recovered his reason he said to me, "Beaver, you have sense, though you have spotted my carcass." I then remonstrated with him on the great folly of being jealous, but he was sullen and made no reply. He then called his wife, but she being asleep did not hear him; he called a second time, and asked for his gun, tomahawk, and scalping-knife; but not receiving any answer he was very angry, and said to me, "Beaver, I will throw away my body," to which I did not think it prudent to make any reply. He then laid himself down on the ground and called his wife a third time. She came to him, and observing displeasure in his countenance, told him not to be angry with the Beaver, for he

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was a great warrior and always opened his heart to them. He ordered her to bring him a bark bowl full of water, and set it down carefully between the Beaver's legs. Whilst she was gone for the water he said to me, "Come here, Beaver, and I will show you that I have nothing sweet on my lips, but will speak the truth." The wife returned and placed the bowl of water as her husband directed; when it had stood some time he said, "Beaver, put your finger in the water and let it remain till I tell you to take it out." I obeyed him with the utmost cheerfulness, and in a few minutes, by his desire, withdrew it. He then said, "Beaver, you know that a husband is so called because he is the master of weakness, and for that reason he should protect his wife; and at the same time, you, as a trader, should not injure me: but that I may not accuse you unjustly, I will try you by my own thoughts. Beaver, look at my wife and look at the water, and tell me where you have put your finger; if you cannot tell you have certainly robbed me." I then put in my finger again, and pointed out the place. "No," said he, looking earnestly at me and his wife, "as you cannot be certain that it is the exact place where you first put your finger, neither can I be certain that you have not robbed me; though I as much believe it as you do that the place you pointed out was the exact spot." I confessed myself surprised at his disbelief,

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but not [being] willing to incense him I told him I was sorry he should imagine me capable of such wickedness as to be guilty of injuring him, for my mind was as calm as the water in an undisturbed state; and after giving him a few presents, sent them away, enjoining him to use his wife well, as she was perfectly innocent. As they departed he said to me, smiling, "Beaver, you must get somebody else to look after your marten traps."

Adultery among the northern savages is generally punished in a summary way by the husband, who either beats his wife very severely or bites off her nose. It is extremely dangerous for a trader to be suspected, for when the husband is intoxicated his jealousy rises into madness, and revenge, whether the party suspected be innocent or guilty, is continually to be expected. When the mind of an Indian is once affected his passion increases in proportion to the quantity of rum which he drinks, though he has the art to conceal it when he is sober. It is the baneful effect of rum which puts every jealous thought in motion, and then it knows no bounds till intoxication completely overpowers him or returning sobriety restores his lost reason.

Early in the month of April I received a letter from Monsieur Jacques Santeron at Lake Schabeechevan, in the same employ as myself, to inform me that he was tired of being a servant and, thinking his labors not suffi-

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ciently rewarded, had determined to make a grand coup, having a number of fine packs which he purposed selling to the Hudson's Bay Company; that he should leave his wintering ground next morning with four birch canoes, and would write further particulars on bark, which he should nail against one of the crooked trees at the foot of the Grand Rapid, in case I should be disposed to come that way; and concluded with great *gaieté de coeur*, wishing me and all my friends very well.

I was greatly surprised on receiving this unpleasant intelligence, and particularly as I had never heard of his integrity being impeached in the smallest degree; and I was disappointed, as I expected him to pass my wintering ground on his return to Pays Plat.

Conceiving it my duty to exert my best endeavors to prevent the loss of so much property to my employers, I engaged Kesco-neek, the chief, and twenty savages, under promise of being satisfied for their trouble, to conduct me to the crooked trees. We went off with the utmost expedition and in a few days arrived at the spot, where I saw the piece of bark, as he described, and the following words written with charcoal: "*Adieu mon cher ami, je prends mon départ avec courage, et j'attends une bonne vente pour me pelleterie. De bon coeur je vous souhaite la prospérité; faites mes compliments à tous mes amis—au revoir mon cher companion.*"



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Having perused it and explained it to the chief, he said he was a bad spirit, and that as he had been gone six days before our arrival it would be impossible to overtake him, as he could not be far from the entrance of the North River, leading to Hudson Bay; and if I pursued him I should not get back in time to trade with the Indians for their great hunt. We therefore returned, after a fruitless expedition, extremely mortified at the disappointment, as I was very sensible he would never return to Canada to make satisfaction to his employers.

Soon after my return the grand band came in with all their winter's hunt, which they call *Kitchee Artaway*. They consisted of about thirty families, of twenty in each. He who has most wives is considered the best hunter, being obliged to provide for their maintenance by his own industry. The Indians laugh at the Europeans for having only one wife, and that for life, as they conceive the Good Spirit formed them to be happy, and not to continue together unless their tempers and dispositions were congenial.

Having bartered for their skins and furs, they asked for rum. I told them I had only one small keg left, which I would give them at their departure, which satisfied them: and when they were ready to embark, I ordered a Canadian to put it into the chief's canoe.

Having disposed of all my merchandise

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except a few articles and a small quantity of rum, to barter with any Indians I might happen to meet with in my return to Pays Plat, we baled up our peltry and on the twenty-third of May left Lac la Mort with four small birch canoes, richly laden with the skins of beavers, otters, martens, mink, loup serviers, beaver-eaters, foxes, bears, etc.

Before I proceed to relate the particulars of my voyage I shall mention the Indian manner of killing the white bear and the buffalo. The large white bear, commonly called the grizzly bear, is a very dangerous animal. When the Indians hunt it they generally go six or eight in a band. The instant they see one they endeavor to surround it by forming a large circle: if it is on the march they fire at it; but it is most frequently discovered, in the winter season, sucking its paws. In that case they approach nearer and form a double row for the animal to run between. One of the party is then sent out, who fires at the bear and generally wounds it. This rouses it to pursue the Indian, who runs between the ranks, and the rest of the band fire and soon despatch it.

The buffalo I need not describe; it is well known to be a remarkably strong animal. The Indians say its head is bullet proof, and therefore they always fire at the body, endeavoring to hit the heart. When they are in pursuit of this animal they make up small huts of snow in different places, for near a mile

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in length on each side of the road. In each of these huts an Indian stands with a bow and arrow, to shoot at it as it passes, preferring that mode to powder and ball as it does not alarm the rest of the herd. The snow prevents the buffalo from smelling the Indians, though their scent is very strong and quick. The instant the animal drops they tomahawk it.

On the second of July we arrived at Portage Plain, so called on account of its being a barren rock, near a mile long, joining to Lake Alempigon. It was sunset when we encamped. Besides the sixteen Canadians, our party was increased considerably by about twenty of the Sturgeon and Nipigon Indians, who accompanied us according to the usual custom of following the trader to assist at the carrying places. The day previous to our departure some traders overtook us, and encamped also. They informed us of a band of Indians who were enemies to the Nipigons being near at hand, and desired me to acquaint the savages with it. Before their arrival the Sturgeon Indians left us, and the other band would fain have quitted the ground; but upon telling them I wanted their assistance on my journey, they agreed to stay, though I thought very reluctantly.

We soon discovered several canoes, and in about half an hour the Indians landed. They were of the nation of the Wasses, and always at war with our savages. Being a select people,

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they seldom associate with other tribes, and are continually on the hunt, only making their appearance in spring and autumn. We received them very cordially, and after the usual forms of salutation, made mutual presents to each other. They told me they had heard of me by some Indians at Lac la Mort, and were desirous of seeing me before my return to Michilimackinac, or in their language *Tecodondoraghie*.

I soon perceived the uneasiness of my Indians and was careful to keep them at some distance from each other; but all my precaution was ineffectual, and before my departure a most dreadful catastrophe was the consequence of their mutual hatred.

Our Indians, having made up huts, began to sing their medicine songs to induce the Wasses to partake of a feast which they said they intended to make, with a view of preventing any dispute with them; but knowing that the Nipigons had no provisions but what I found them, I suspected their intentions were not so pacific as they pretended. This induced me to ask a boy belonging to the band why they pretended to make a feast without having any provision to do it. He replied that the Wasses had made them a present of dried meat, and with this and some huckleberries they had saved they intended to make their visitants merry. This answer confirmed my suspicions, as no feast is ever

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made where friendship is intended without inviting the trader, and as no notice was sent me I dreaded the evil consequence of their meeting.

Deliberating with myself on the unpleasant prospect, and considering how to act to prevent mischief, I was interrupted in my meditations by a savage (*Ayarbee*, or the Big Man), who came to give me intelligence of an intended plan to destroy the Nipigon Indians, and which was communicated to him by an old woman who belonged to the band of Wasses.

In about an hour the Nipigon huts were in order to receive their intended guests, who were encamped in a hollow surrounded with cedar trees and bushes close to the lake side. The Nipigons, being determined to counteract the designs of their deceitful visitors and punish their intended perfidy, made holes in the bark of their huts, in which they placed their guns, loaded with swan shot. Each man taking his station, the Wasses to the number of eighteen ascended the hill and were coming prepared to partake of the feast, with knives and wooden bowls, intending to overpower the Nipigons on a given signal; but they were fatally disappointed, for when they got within thirty yards of the Nipigon huts they were fired at and all the band except a girl about fourteen years of age killed on the spot; she was dangerously wounded, but advanced with a gun, which she snatched from an Indian who was preparing to despatch her, and shot

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Ayarbee through the head, and was herself soon after tomahawked and scalped by a Nipigon boy about the same age, who at such an early period of life displayed all that ferocity which marks the most determined chief.

Thus was treachery rewarded: and though in my heart I could not but approve of the conduct of the Nipigon Indians, I was afraid of trusting to them and had resolved on taking my leave of them when the chief came up and informed me he was very sorry that his band could not accompany me any farther, for being afraid of the resentment of the Wasses, when they came to hear of the transaction, notwithstanding they had done it in their own defense, they had determined to depart; and soon after pushed off their canoes and left me, a circumstance which pleased me exceedingly. The next day a party of Indians met us, to whom I related the disaster. They were very much shocked, and said the Nipigon Indians might repent their rash conduct, though at the same time they acknowledged them right in guarding against the designs of the Wasses. They asked me if I had got their packs, as they assured me they had made a good hunt and had rich peltry. This information vexed me exceedingly, as I should certainly have increased my cargo had not the affair happened, and likewise have given more satisfaction to my employers, though I had

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already a large quantity of goods and had every reason to be pleased with my success. The Nipigons made up fourteen bales of dried meat, which they took with them; but the furs and skins were hidden in the woods and never afterwards found that I heard of.

We continued our journey to Lac Eturgeon, where soon after our landing we killed a great many wild fowl and caught plenty of fish. Here we met about fifty of the Hawoyzask, or Rat Nation Indians, with whom I made a small barter, chiefly with rum, having disposed of all my Indian goods.

Our journey was retarded for some time in order to gratify my curiosity. A young Indian girl fell sick, and the chief desired me to stay to see the wonderful effects of their medicines, as she was very bad, and without immediate assistance, he said, must soon change her climate. The physician who attended her said that the Matchee Mannitoo, or bad spirit, had put the bear's claws into her, and his medicines would remove them. A hut was prepared and the girl stripped to her *matchee-coaty*, or under petticoat; she was then painted with vermilion and daubed over with soot and bear's grease and profusely sweated, which soon relieved her pain. During the operation the physician addressed himself to the Master of Life, begging his assistance and thanking him for giving knowledge to restore health. Then, giving her a decoction of roots, he made

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a perfect cure.<sup>37</sup> I could not help admiring his skill and manner of proceeding, though I attributed her recovery solely to the plentiful perspiration she underwent.

Previous to our departure one of the women was delivered of a fine boy, and I was highly delighted with the mother's tenderness as the infant sucked the milk, which in their language is called *tootooshonarbo*, or the sap of the human breast, an expression which struck me forcibly. The husband was also very attentive and performed the part of an affectionate parent, which induced me to give him some rum to cheer his heart and drink my health. He seemed pleased with the present, and addressing himself to the Great Spirit thanked him for the safe delivery of his *mentimoye*: then looking very earnestly at me, [he] told me how much he was indebted to me for the comfort that I had afforded him, and that he was sure that I was a brave warrior, for my generosity to him and his wife when they so much wanted assistance. When the young warrior cried, he observed that he wished to be grateful to me for my attention to his parents, and that it was only the echo of his breath (meaning his voice) to praise the goodness of the Saggonash, or Englishman. As I got into my canoe he said, "Beaver, be strong, you will always have a public road among the Nipigon

<sup>37</sup>On the practices of the medicine men compare Alexander Henry's *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 113-22.



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Indians, therefore return as soon as you can. In the meantime I shall take care to acquaint all the Indians with your goodness, and I hope when we see you again we shall have had a good hunt and be able to give you furs and skins to repay your kindness." I told him I always loved the Indians, that I was adopted by the Chippewas and considered myself as one of their tribe; that I would return as soon as possible with plenty of goods for their families; that my heart was melted by his regard for me; and giving him and his wife each a parting glass of the strong water, [I] took my leave and pursued my journey.

We arrived at Pays Plat on the tenth of August, where I met some brother traders who had been in different parts of the inlands, particularly the Northwest. Here we waited for fresh goods from our employers and enjoyed ourselves with the remains of our different provisions, which we threw into a common stock, and made ourselves merry with the scanty pittance, recounting our several adventures: but none of them had suffered the difficulties I had experienced, except Mr. Shaw, whom I happily relieved at Lake Manontoye, the rest of the traders having wintered very remote from me, by the way of the Grand Portage. Soon after our arrival our employers sent their agents with a fresh assortment of merchandise and provisions, which rejoiced us exceedingly, having been a

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considerable time without corn or grease, and absent from Michilimackinac about fourteen months. I delivered my cargo of furs, consisting of about 140 packs in good condition, and loaded the canoes with the fresh goods; then taking leave of my companions, [I] prepared for my departure for the inlands to winter another year among the Nipigon savages. But before I begin to relate my second adventure I cannot forbear making some observations on the hardships attending an Indian life, particularly as an interpreter and trader.

My salary was about £150 per annum, which I certainly deserved, considering the knowledge I had of the Chippewa language.

I was sent into the inlands with only corn and hard grease, without any other provisions I could rely on; for as to fish and other animal food, the former in a great measure depends on the season, the latter on the arrival of savages; and though in general I was successful in aquatic pursuits, and received frequent supplies from the Indians, it was a precarious mode of subsistence, and at Lac la Mort I suffered great hardships.

I had sixteen men, and an Indian and his wife occasionally with me, to feed and govern, and on the continuance of their health my existence in great measure depended. As it was my constant duty to be in the way in case of the arrival of savages, being the only one who could talk their language, I had few

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opportunities of hunting, neither could I go far abroad to examine whether the Canadians did their duty or not. I was, therefore, always full of anxiety, and rejoiced when the spring returned to set me free.

The constant attention necessary in taking care of the goods to prevent depredations; the continual fears and apprehensions of being plundered by a set of intoxicated beings; always liable to insults, without daring to resent them; and when I had bartered all my merchandise and made a successful trip, feeling a painful solicitude till the fruits of my labors were safely delivered to my employers. Upon the whole, perhaps no situation can be more distressing, and it has often filled my mind with surprise when I reflected on the engagement I entered into, which consumed the prime of my days in a traffic the dangers and fatigues of which scarce any salary could compensate. I believe nothing but the flattering idea of thinking myself superior to others as an interpreter prompted me to continue in a station so fatiguing to support and so difficult to execute, and I cannot but conclude with this observation: that however censurable a man may be for indulging even this degree of pride, the liberal mind will easily pardon the presumption, as they know he alone is the sufferer; and as self-opinion governs the pursuits of mankind, the individual who is most influenced by it must stand or fall by the consequence.

## Chapter 11

### SECOND WINTER AMONG THE NIPIGON INDIANS

ON the fifteenth of August I left Pays Plat with four birch canoes and the same men who wintered with me at Lac la Mort, and arrived at Rivière la Pique, which runs into Lake Superior. This river is very crooked for about seven miles, and extremely deep; it abounds with fish, particularly pike, from which it takes its name. On our landing we found a large band of Chippewas and some of the Rat nation, who immediately prepared a feast for us of dried meat, fish, etc. Among them was an Indian named *Ogasby*, or the Horse; he was reckoned even by his own tribe a bad Indian, which put me on my guard during my encampment there. I traded for their skins and furs and gave them some rum, with which they had a frolic which lasted for three days and nights; on this occasion five men were killed, and one woman dreadfully burned. When the fumes of the liquor had evaporated they began, as usual, to reflect on the folly of their conduct, and all except *Ogasby* expressed great concern. He seemed rather to be pleased at the mischief which had happened, and before my departure

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I was informed that he intended to destroy me and plunder the property. To frustrate his villainous intention, I kept him in good humor and made him sleep in my hut, a compliment he seemed highly pleased with, and which I believe for the time diverted him from his purpose; and though by no means fond of his company, I judged it most prudent to have my enemy in sight. In the morning I gave him a glass of rum and promised him a two-gallon keg to carry off the ground, which, as the Indians express themselves, drove the bad spirit from his heart. When my men had prepared everything for embarkation I gave the chief of the band the liquor, and a single bottle of rum more than I promised to *Ogasby*, unknown to the rest, in which I had infused a considerable quantity of laudanum. Unsuspicious of what I had done he put the bottle to his mouth, and shaking me by the hand, said to me, "*Kee talinimanco negee*," or, "Your health, friend," and immediately took a hearty draught, which soon stupefied and lulled him into a profound sleep in which, I was afterwards informed, he remained twelve hours, depriving him of the power of doing harm; and that soon after, an Indian who had an antipathy against him and only sought an opportunity of gratifying his resentment, tomahawked him. His eldest son burned him and fixed his bones on a high pole as he was the head chief of the tribe.

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We proceeded on our voyage and arrived at a short carrying place, called Portage la Rame, where we encamped for nine days, being wind bound. Here we found a number of Indians in the same situation.

As soon as Lake Superior was passable with safety we continued our journey through strong and dangerous rapids, which kept us continually in the water and very sensibly affected our limbs. On these occasions, where great exertion is necessary, all distinction is laid aside and it is *tel maître tel valet*; the bourgeois must work as hard as the engagés, to encourage them to do their duty with more alacrity, and avoid all cause of complaint.

The wind proving favorable, we proceeded to Cranberry Lake, so called from the great quantity of cranberries growing in the swamps. We stopped here two days to refresh ourselves after the great fatigue we had undergone in struggling against the rapids. Being sufficiently recovered and having nothing to detain us, we proceeded to a short carrying place called *la Grande Côte de la Roche* at the entrance of the Nipigon River, which is a high ridge of rocks that must be passed to avoid the great cataract which I mentioned in my former voyage. At this time we had very little animal food, but fortunately killed three large bears in the middle of the portage, which supported us several days, besides which we

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reserved some of the meat we had smoked and dried to carry with us.

From *la grande Côte de la Roche* we proceeded to *Lac le Nid au Corbeau*, or Crow's-nest Lake, which is about 200 miles in circumference and supplied by a number of small rivers. There are also several islands on it which furnish the Indians with great plenty of wild fowl. Bears are also found here in abundance, and a surprising number of beaver dams, running in a crooked direction about ten miles. The Chippewas hunt here and find a great deal of game.

The reader will observe that in the first voyage I gave an account of another Crow's-nest Lake, which is very small, with an island in the middle with high palm trees. In such an extent of country it is not surprising that there should be two places of the same name.

During our stay a band of Indians arrived from Lake Arbitibis, who probably were dissatisfied with the trader they dealt with and intended to go to Michilimackinac, but finding that I understood their language they bartered with me and made me a present of meat and fish. An accident happened here which had nearly proved fatal, and which was of infinite service to me ever after, by putting me more on my guard in all transactions with the savages.

Some of the chiefs being desirous of seeing my Northwest guns, I was obliged to open a

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case for their inspection. This I did unwillingly, as the weather was fine and I was extremely anxious to get to the wintering ground before a heavy fall of snow. Having shown them the guns, they loaded four and laid them down by the cases, intending to try them. During the time they were thus employed I was busy in arranging the goods that had been displaced in getting at them, but as soon as I was at leisure I took up one of the guns in a careless manner, not knowing it was charged, and snapped the lock, which most unfortunately shot off the ear of one of the chiefs, and I also received some injury by the powder flying in my face and almost depriving me of sight. The discharge was so instantaneous and appeared so premeditated that the chief reproached me in very severe terms for the injury I had done him, and threatened revenge; however, I soon convinced him it was an accident, and giving him some presents, he consoled himself for the loss of his ear, which was very large and handsome and without a single break, which made it very valuable in his estimation. It was fortunate I did not kill him, as in all probability we should have been sacrificed to the resentment of the band.

The Indians pride themselves on having large ears, and extended as wide as possible, which renders them liable to be pulled off. It is very common in drunken frolics to lose them, but when they are only torn they cut



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them smooth with a knife and sew the parts together with a needle and deer's sinews, and after sweating in a stove resume their usual cheerfulness.

The next day we took our leave and pursued our journey to *Shecarke Sakiegan*, or the Skunk's Lake, which runs with a strong current. In the fall it abounds, with geese and ducks. Here we hunted one day and with good success. The next morning at break of day we embarked and had favorable weather till we arrived at Lake Schabeechevan, or the Weed Lake. This lake is about 180 miles in circumference and full of small islands. It abounds with fish, and the swamps are full of wild rice and cranberries. It is about six days' march from Lac la Mort.

This lake was an unfortunate situation to my employers last year, when one of their servants, Jacques Santeron, went off with a valuable cargo.<sup>38</sup> On my arrival I looked out for the house he had erected, but could not discern the least trace of it. Probably he was so elated that he made a *feu de joie* on the prospect of being his own master. At the extremity of this lake is a fall of water, which runs from a river of the same name, and has a direct communication with the waters leading from Fort Albany,<sup>39</sup> within the boundaries of

<sup>38</sup> See *ante*, p 119.

<sup>39</sup> This fort, built by the Hudson's Bay Company, stood at the mouth of Albany River, on the shore of

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the Hudson's Bay [Company] territories. It is about thirty days' march across nineteen portages and creeks, besides fourteen rapids, which are a great hindrance to the journey. The Indians run down the strong currents without the least fear, and seldom meet with any accident, performing the voyage in one-third part of the time they take in ascending, and without any damage to their canoes, which in going against the stream are frequently rendered useless and they are obliged to make new ones before they can pursue their voyage; but it is a most convenient circumstance that they are nowhere at a loss for birch bark, and being also very expert, they will make a canoe in three days sufficiently large to carry three people, with necessaries for their support and room to stow their furs and skins.<sup>40</sup> On this lake there are about 150 good hunters, who make a great many packs of beaver, etc., and this was one inducement for settling here, which was increased by the prospect of a plentiful supply of fish, rice, and cranberries, which are winter comforts of too great consequence to be slighted.

James Bay. In 1686 it was captured by a French raiding party from Montreal and held for seven years, when it again passed into English possession. This was the affair alluded to by Alexander Henry, *Travels and Adventures*, p 238.

<sup>40</sup> A description of the Indian method of making bark canoes is given by Henry, p 172.

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Having secured the canoes and refreshed my men with good soup, I left them in charge of the goods and took two Indians to show me a convenient place to build a house, which having fixed on, a building was erected fifty feet long and twenty feet wide, divided into two separate apartments, one for merchandise and the other for common use. The rum being concealed in the woods and everything properly arranged, we put the fishing tackle in order; and as the lakes began to freeze very fast I divided my men into two parties, one-half to be employed in fishing, the remainder (except one man whom I always kept in the house) in providing fuel for winter. In about three weeks a sufficient quantity of wood was piled near the house, and the wood-cutters joined the fishing party. They proved very successful, so that our minds were more at ease than in the preceding year, not having the dread of famine.

In about ten days a numerous band of Indians arrived with their fall hunt, none of whom I had ever seen, not having wintered so far inland before. They seemed well pleased to find a trader settled among them, and particularly as I spoke the language; but when I informed them that I was a brother warrior and showed the marks of adoption in my flesh they were highly delighted. The women were immediately ordered to make up huts and prepare a feast. Whilst this was doing

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the Indians came into my house, one by one, and seating themselves on the floor began to smoke and looked very cheerful. When I had given them tobacco and other Indian goods the old chief, whose name was *Mattoyash*, or the Earth, took me round the neck and kissed my cheek, then addressed me in the following words:

*"Meegwoitch Kitchee Mannito, kaygait kee zargetoone an Nishinnorbay nogome, shashyyar payshik artawway winnin tercushenan, cawween kitchee morgussey, an Nishinnorbay nogome cawwicker indenendum. Kaygait kitchee mushkowway geosay haguarmissey waybenan matchee oathy nee zargetoone Saggonash artawway; winnin kaygait hapadgey kitchee morgussey an Nishinnorbay; kaygwoitch annahoycassey neenerwind mornooch towwarch nee zargey debwoye kee appay omar, cuppar bebone nepewar appiminiqui omar."*—"I thank the Master of Life for loving us Indians and sending us this day an English trader, who will open his heart to me and my young men. Take courage, young men, suffer not your hearts to be bound up, and throw away the bad spirit from you. We all love the English traders for we have heard of their pity to savages; we believe that they have an open heart, that their veins run clear like the sea. It is true we Indians have but little sense when drunk, but we hope you will not think of this, and if you will stay with us we will hunt with spirit for you."

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When he had finished his speech they all got up and taking me by the right hand conducted me to their hut. Immediately on entering one of the warriors placed me on a large beaver robe which was prepared for me, and put a wampum belt round my neck, singing all the time to the Master of Life, while myself and the chief were eating. When the feast was over I took two of the Indians to my house and gave them two kegs of rum and ten carrots of tobacco, with other articles, for which they gave me all their peltry. Then they began to frolic, which continued three days and nights. The only accident which happened was to a little child, whose back was broken by the mother. When they had rested a day after intoxication I supplied them with plenty of ammunition for their winter's hunt and they departed perfectly satisfied with their reception. I cannot help relating the method I was obliged to adopt to quiet an old Indian woman, who was more troublesome than the rest, and continually importuned me for liquor.

I infused forty drops of the tincture of cantharides and the same quantity of laudanum into a glass of rum, and when she came to me soliciting very earnestly for the strong water, I gave her the dose which was prepared for her. She drank it without hesitation, and being already much intoxicated, it made her stagger. But this did not satisfy her and she

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still asked for more. I then repeated the dose, which she also drank, and then fell on the floor. I ordered my Canadian to carry her out of the house and lay her carefully near her own wigwam, where she remained twelve hours in a deep sleep, to my entire satisfaction. I have always found laudanum extremely useful. In general it may be considered an essential article in the commerce with the Indians, as it proves the only method of overcoming their intoxicated senses and making the life of a trader more tolerable, by putting a stop to their impertinence.

On the nineteenth of November a band of about forty Indians came in with a few skins and a great quantity of dried meat, with some bear's grease, which I purchased for a little rum, and advised them to carry it along with them off the ground. They complied with my wishes, and embarked perfectly sober.

It was always my custom to endeavor to persuade them to take away the rum, though I seldom succeeded. The fatigue of watching them when the liquor begins to operate is inconceivable, besides the risk of our lives and property.

After their departure I was left for nearly a month with only one man, the rest being employed in fishing and watching the marten traps. In both pursuits they were successful, but particularly in the former, having brought home near eight thousand trout, pike, pickerel,

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and whitefish, which we hung up as usual to freeze. When the severe weather sets in every man has his allowance served out twice a day, and this rule is constantly adhered to even though the stock be very considerable.

In the beginning of December a new-married couple arrived, and having given them a little rum, they got very merry; and perceiving the woman was in great good humor, I desired her to sing a love song, which she consented to do with cheerfulness.

### THE SONG

*"Debwoye, nee zargay ween aighter, payshik oahthy, seizeebockquoit shenargussey me tar-biscoach nepeech cassawicka nepoo, moszack pemartus, seizeebockquoit meteeek."*

"It is true I love him only whose heart is like the sweet sap that runs from the sugar tree, and is brother to the aspen leaf that always lives and shivers."

I thanked her for her song, and giving the husband a bottle of scuttaywabo,<sup>41</sup> left them together to enjoy their hearts' delight; and as there was not sufficient to intoxicate them, I was not afraid of a jealous fit. I always bore in mind the circumstance at Lac la Mort, and my fortunate escape. In the morning they departed, paying me well for my presents with some beaver, bear, and otter skins.

A few days after, an Indian arrived with

<sup>41</sup> The Chippewa word for rum, or brandy.

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his two wives and three children. They immediately came into my house and sat down by the fire. I thought I discovered deceit in his countenance, and watched him very narrowly. I asked him what success he had met with in his hunt. He told me he believed the Master of Life was angry with him, for he had fired at several animals and expended all his ammunition without doing execution. This was a figurative mode of expression, and convinced me that he was lazy and could not get credit for what he wanted. He added that his family had been without provisions some days, and hoped I would cheer their hearts and be a friend to them. I then ordered a large kettle to be put on the fire and boiled some fish, which they ate of very heartily, particularly the women and children.

I questioned him concerning his hunting grounds. He told me he was from Hudson Bay, and had come so far hearing some traders were settled at Skunk's Lake, and as he knew there were plenty of animals he expected to get a good many skins. This I was convinced was false and I immediately considered him as a straggler or he certainly would not have traveled so far, unless he had done something to displease the servants at the Company's forts and could not obtain credit. Looking at me very earnestly, he asked me to trust him a gun, blanket, and ammunition, but I re-



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fused him. This displeased him, and going out of the house, one of them called him, the other followed him out and said something to him in a low tone of voice. This appeared to me like a confederacy and put me on my guard. In a few minutes he returned and renewed his solicitations, saying, "Are you afraid to trust me forty skins? I will pay you in the spring." I told him I never gave credit to any but good hunters, and I was sure he was an idle straggler, who lived without industry, and advised him to return to his own tribe and solicit their assistance who knew him better than I did. So severe a check to his application (and which I was afterwards sorry for) seemed to rouse the bad spirit in his heart, and he left me under the influence of the Matchee Manitoo and went down to his canoe, seeming to be in deep discourse with his wives.

My man observing them, watched them very narrowly and saw the Indian endeavoring to file off the end of his gun to make it convenient to conceal under his blanket. Having shortened and loaded it, he returned with it hid under his dress. This transaction being a convincing proof of his diabolical intention, I directed my man to stand on one side of the door and I took my post on the other, waiting his entrance into the house. Just as he passed the threshold I knocked him down with a billet of wood, and taking his short gun from him, beat him so much that we were obliged to

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carry him down to his canoe, where his family were waiting for him, and ordered them all off the ground, threatening that in case of refusal his canoe should be instantly broken to pieces and his family turned adrift. The squaws and children appeared very much distressed and with great reluctance obeyed my order. Thus I got rid of an unprincipled set, and, as will soon appear, escaped a danger which was certainly intended to involve me and my men in utter ruin.

A few days after their departure an Indian arrived and informed me that Mr. Joseph La Forme, a brother trader who was settled at Lac le Sel, was killed by a savage, and described his person. I had no doubt but he was the same man who [had] attempted to destroy me. I communicated every circumstance of his conduct, and the revenge I took on the occasion. The Indian congratulated me on my happy escape, as he was known to be a bad man by all the tribe, having killed his brother and one of his wives last fall, which was the reason that the band he belonged to would not suffer him to stay among them. As I was anxious to know the particulars, I desired him to relate them. He told me that he was informed by a savage whom he accidentally met, and to whom the murderer had revealed the particulars, that the Indian being disappointed in his design against me, pursued his journey with the bad spirit in his heart and arrived

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at Joseph La Forme's house, which he entered, and asked for rum and tobacco, which was given him; but observing he had not anything to trade with, La Forme was suspicious of him. Whilst he was smoking he asked for credit, but was refused and told that he was not only a bad hunter, but that he had a heart of lead. This imprudent reproach incensed him, and observing no one in the house but the trader (the men being fishing) he watched [for] a convenient opportunity and when La Forme stooped to light his pipe, shot him through the head, plundered the house of a few things, and went off.

On this information I despatched six Indians with a trusty Canadian to endeavor to secure the property, in which they fortunately succeeded and brought away all the peltry, merchandise, etc., and the deceased trader's men, whom I engaged in my service. About six weeks after, one of the tribe whom he had formerly offended and who had heard of this recent act of villainy, after repeated reproaches for his baseness, tomahawked him, cut off his head, and brought it to my house to show my Indians.

The unhappy fate of Joseph La Forme affords a melancholy example of the precarious situation of all Indian traders, and furnishes a useful lesson of instruction to those who may in future be engaged in commerce with the savages—that it is frequently more prudent to conceal resentment than to gratify it.

## Chapter 12

### FAMINE AND CANNIBALISM; OBSERVATIONS UPON THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

THE latter end of January, 1779 a band of the Rat nation arrived, belonging to *Shekarkistergoan*, or the Skunk's-head Lake, which is between Lake Nipigon and Lake Manontoye. They brought me provisions and furs, which I bartered for, giving them rum as usual, of which they drank freely without doing any mischief. After their departure we were short of provisions, having a larger household to provide for, by taking La Forme's men into my service. We were reduced to a few fish and some wild rice, or menomon (which are kept in muccucks, or bark boxes) to support myself and seventeen men, the allowance to each being only a handful of rice and a small fish, about 2-lb. weight, which is boiled together and makes pleasant soup. I have often been surprised that fish broth is not more generally used, as it is certainly very palatable; but I am not sufficiently informed in medical knowledge to speak either of its wholesomeness or nutritive qualities. Sturgeon broth is delicious, and leaves a pleasing taste on the tongue; but as it rather increases the appetite for food, as I have

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experienced, it should not be taken but when there is plenty of meat to be got. This fish is very common in Albany, and is sold at 1 d. per lb. York currency. The flesh is called Albany beef.

The frost continuing very severe, and no appearance of Indians to supply our wants, we were obliged to take off the hair from the bear skins and roast the hide, which tastes like pork. This, with some *tripe de roche* boiled, was all our nourishment.

*Tripe de roche*, or *hawercoon*, is a weed that grows to the rocks, of a spongy nature and very unwholesome, causing violent pains in the bowels, and frequently occasions a flux. I am informed the traders in the Northwest have often experienced this disorder; and some of them in very severe weather have been compelled to eat it for fourteen days successively, which weakened them exceedingly. When the disorder does not terminate in a flux it occasions a violent vomiting, and sometimes spitting of the blood, with acute spasms in the bowels.

After suffering great hardships I advised my men to make marten traps and set them in the woods as they did last winter at Lac la Mort, which supplied us occasionally, but very short of our real wants. At last a band of Indians arrived with ten sleigh-loads of meat and furs, which relieved us and gave us fresh spirits. My men discovered them at a distance,

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and though much enfeebled by severe hunger, put on their snowshoes to meet them.

It is surprising what efforts nature makes to support distress, and how cheerfully she struggles when the prospect of relief is near at hand. Every painful recollection of past sufferings quickly vanishes and new life seems to breathe through every vein. Those who live in constant luxury and are ignorant of the meaning of the bread of carefulness are strangers to the joy arising from an unexpected supply, and sitting down to a table in the wilderness. Hunger needs not the borrowed aid of sauce; and, in the language of Pope, "To enjoy, is to obey."—How delightful is such obedience!

The Indians, seeing our distress by our looks, which were very meagre, gave us all their provisions, consisting of bear, raccoon, and moose. The kettle was soon put on the fire and we made a comfortable repast, with cheerful hearts; the Indians, during the time, enjoying the happiness of relieving our wants.

Notwithstanding the cruelty of savages they possess virtues which do honor to human nature, and exhibit instances of generosity and kindness which the most philanthropic soul cannot exceed. They are ignorant of those mean, sordid sentiments which disgrace many more enlightened and more wealthy; and from the knowledge I have of their disposition, I am sure they would blush at the parsimonious

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conduct of those whom Providence hath blessed with affluence.

After the repast the chief (not willing to disturb us before) asked for some tobacco, and having smoked some time, he said he had bad news to tell me, which some Indians had informed him of, concerning Mr. Fulton, then at *Shekarkistergoan*, and which he was sorry to relate as it affected him exceedingly. I desired him to finish his pipe and drink a glass of rum before he began the story; and at the same time mentioned my surprise at not hearing of any remarkable circumstance, having traded with a band of the Rat nation within a few days, who came from that lake. He told me he had met the band and related the affair to them, who were much astonished; but as Mr. Fulton's men were not returned from fishing when they left the place, the transaction was not known till after their departure.

Mr. Fulton being obliged to divide his men into two parties, which is called the *cawway*, or casting lots, which party shall hunt and fish and which shall stay with the master, did so accordingly. The fishing party consisted of Charles Janvier, François St. Ange, and Lewis Dufresne, all natives of Canada, who being provided with axes, ice-cutters, and fishing material, set off and at the expiration of eight days arrived at a convenient place, where they built a hut in which they lived for some time tolerably well; but fishing

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failing them, and having no success in hunting, they were almost starved. In this situation, said the chief, the bad spirit had entered the heart of Janvier, and he being the strongest man, supported hunger better than his companions, by which he was enabled soon after to effect a diabolical purpose he had formed of killing the first Indian who should come in his way, and which he had declared he would do. In the height of their distress Janvier perceived a savage at some distance with a load at his back, and instantly returning to the hut told his poor, dispirited partners of their approaching relief. They instantly got up, though very weak, and came out of the hut as fast as their feeble limbs would allow them. The Indian arrived, took off his load, which was only two otters and two hares, and gave them to Janvier, who received them with great satisfaction; and when he had skinned them, boiled them in the kettle without cleansing them, so extreme was their hunger. This seasonable relief was soon devoured, and from the eagerness with which Janvier ate and the satisfaction which appeared in his countenance when he looked at the savage the men were in hopes he had forgotten the rash determination he had formed, and flattered themselves his mind was not so depraved as to entertain a thought of doing an injury to the man whose timely assistance had saved their lives. The next morning



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the Indian told them he was sorry he could not assist them further, having no ammunition, but that he was going to Mr. Fulton for a supply.

Janvier's heart being inexorable even to the kindness he had received, he desired the savage to assist him in placing a large log of wood on the fire, as his companions were unable to do it. The Indian cheerfully complied, and stooping to take it up, Janvier knocked him down with an axe and dragged him to the door of the hut, cut him up, and with the most unfeeling barbarity put as much of the flesh of his deliverer into the kettle as he thought sufficient for a meal.<sup>42</sup> When it was dressed he compelled François St. Ange and Louis Dufresne to partake of it, and obliged them to kiss the cross which hung at his breast and swear by all the saints never to reveal the transaction: threatening at the same time that if they did they should share the same fate. Intimidated by his threats and the certainty that he would fulfill them, they solemnly promised perfect compliance with his injunctions. Having overcome their first aversion which extreme hunger had occasioned, they ate immoderately of the horrid meal and soon after fell sick with violent retchings. During their indisposition they complained to each other softly that it was eating the Indian's

<sup>42</sup> For similar instances of cannibalism in the Lake Superior country, see Henry, pp. 199-201 and 212-13.

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flesh which had occasioned their sickness. Janvier, overhearing them, called them fools and rascals and asked them if they were afraid the savage would come to life again; and with an insolent sneer desired them to tell him which they thought the best part of a man. The poor fellows only replied they were very sick and could not tell the cause. In a few days (having no other provision) the Indian was eaten up, and Janvier determined to have human flesh if no other could be obtained. To this end he sought an opportunity to quarrel with St. Ange—Dufresne not daring to interfere in the dispute. Janvier willing, however, to appear as plausible in the eyes of Dufresne as possible, widened the breach very artfully, till pretending he was no longer able to contain his anger, [he] asked Dufresne if he did not think St. Ange deserved the Indian's fate for daring to say he would reveal the circumstances he had so solemnly sworn to conceal. Dufresne, dreading the consequences of differing with him in sentiment, said he thought St. Ange was to blame; upon which reply, Janvier immediately struck him with an axe and killed him. He then cut him up and boiled a part, of which he obliged Dufresne to partake, he not daring to show any reluctance. Fortunately for Dufresne the weather became more moderate, and having caught plenty of fish, they proposed to return to their master. Janvier, intoxicated with ideas of his superior-

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ity, obliged Dufresne to drag him in an Indian sleigh to Mr. Fulton's house—a cruel imposition upon him, and a dreadful service to a weak, emaciated man; but knowing he was unable to resist, he made a virtue of necessity and obeyed the tyrant with seeming cheerfulness. On the journey he was frequently reminded of his oath, and the fatal consequences that would attend him if he should ever divulge the secret, which Janvier assured him would produce instant death.

Mr. Fulton was much rejoiced at their return, being in want of his men as the Indians were daily coming in with their winter hunt. Soon after their arrival he made inquiry after St. Ange, but no answer was given. He then addressed Janvier directly upon the subject, who said he was gone on the hunt with a chief of the name of *Onnemay*, or the Sturgeon, whom Mr. Fulton knew, and that he would soon return. One of the Canadians contradicted him by saying that could not be true, as *Onnemay* [had] left Mr. Fulton's house the day before their return. Janvier then said he might be mistaken in the chief's name as he was not well acquainted with the Indian language, and Dufresne, for fear of a discovery at that time, changed the conversation in hopes of pleasing Janvier.

Several days elapsed, and St. Ange not returning, Janvier was again questioned, who told them as before and appealed to Dufresne

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for the truth of his assertion, which he was obliged to confirm.

Mr. Fulton, not being perfectly satisfied, examined them apart; from Janvier he could not get any information, but Dufresne hesitated, and at last said he had sworn not to reveal, but that St. Ange would never return. Mr. Fulton endeavored to convince him that the breach of an oath so imposed was no crime; and in the end he convinced the Canadian that it was so far from being obligatory in the sight of God, that it would be a sin of the most heinous nature in him to conceal the truth; artfully adding as an additional argument to induce him to reveal the transaction that if he had no doubt he was himself perfectly innocent he could not have any honest motive for secrecy, and that he had no occasion to dread the resentment of Janvier, as he would engage to protect him from all hazard by the discovery. Thus persuaded and encouraged, Dufresne disclosed the whole affair, but requested Mr. Fulton's secrecy, which he promised until the conversation should be renewed, when it was agreed that he should relate every particular in Janvier's presence. Janvier was repeatedly urged by the rest of the men to give them some information respecting the absence of St. Ange, but he remained obstinately silent. Some of them went so far as to accuse him in pretty plain terms of knowing too much about him,

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but he treated their insinuations with indifference.

Mr. Fulton, having disposed of all his goods, prepared to leave his wintering ground, and everything being properly arranged, they departed. The first night after their departure Mr. Fulton loaded a brace of pistols, and having previously acquainted his men with the discovery Dufresne had made and the punishment he intended for the villain, came out of his tent and stood by the fire round which the Canadians were seated. The conversation about St. Ange being purposely renewed, Mr. Fulton remarked it was cruel to leave him in the woods with the Indians, and blamed Janvier particularly, as he was the foreman of the party and therefore the more responsible. Janvier, nettled at the repetition of the subject (for guilt is soon angry) replied that St. Ange was able to take care of himself, and that he had not any control over him. Dufresne was then censured, upon which, agreeably to the plan settled with Mr. Fulton, he divulged the whole transaction and gave a full account of every particular of Janvier's conduct. Janvier attempted to take instant revenge for the aspersion, as he called it, and denied the charge with the most hardened effrontery and solemn asseveration. Mr. Fulton then thought it a proper time to interfere; and to cover him, if possible, with confusion asked him "which was the best part of a man."

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Janvier replied with ready insolence that those who had eaten human flesh could easily tell: but being repeatedly urged and at length thrown off his guard, he replied in great wrath "the feet." The party, encouraged by this confession, pressed the charge till at last he confessed the facts he was accused of, and declared that in a similar situation he would kill his brother.

Mr. Fulton could no longer suppress his resentment, and going up to Janvier told him he was an abandoned villain, first for killing a harmless Indian who had generously relieved his wants, and afterwards eating him like a cannibal; that not content with these atrocious acts, he had increased his guilt by another deliberate murder on a defenseless man, his companion, his fellow laborer, and friend; that he was a disgrace to human nature, and ought not to be suffered to live a moment longer; and without allowing him time to reply, shot him through the head. The men were ordered to bury him, and in the morning Mr. Fulton continued his journey to Michilimackinac, where on his arrival he surrendered himself to the commanding officer, who on a close examination of the men honorably acquitted him, but recommended him not to venture again into those parts where the Indian was killed, lest the savages should hear of the transaction and resent the death of one of their tribe, whereby the innocent might suffer for the acts of the guilty.

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In the month of February, I had a visit from a trader dressed in a smoked-leather shirt, who was accompanied by three Indians and had been absent five days from Fort Albany. He said he was induced to come from a motive of curiosity to see me, not having heard of any person wintering so far inland before except the servants belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. At that time I had very little provisions, and eight men to maintain, besides Mr. Joseph La Forme's Canadians. Our chief food was *tripe de roche*. On his arrival the kettle was on the fire with the leaves. He asked what food I had. I ordered some to be taken out of the pot and put into a bark dish, which he tasted but could not swallow. I informed him it had been a principal part of our diet for many days, and in the best of times we had nothing but wild animal food and seldom any flour, as the quantity of Indian corn we were able to bring along with us from Pays Plat was not sufficient to last the winter. When I had given him a description of my mode of living, which he confessed was very different from the comforts he enjoyed, I took him into my store and showed him the packs of beavers I had collected. This increased his surprise, as he could not conceive how it was possible to transport a sufficient quantity of goods to barter for the value I seemed to be in possession of. He asked me to return with him and promised to supply

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me with provisions; but I told him I was engaged in an employ, and had supported the same disagreeable situation the preceding winter at Lac la Mort; and as I could not expect to pass my life among the Indians with so much ease as in England, my duty obliged me to remain till the season was over, when I should return and endeavor to make myself some amends for the hardships I had endured by giving a good account of the merchandise intrusted to my care and receiving a reward for my labors. In the morning he took his leave, wishing me the speedy arrival of some Indians who might be able to relieve me from such pressing necessity by supplying me with plenty of more nourishing and palatable food.

This civility from one of the Hudson's Bay Company's servants leads me to make some few observations in vindication of that respectable body, whose character has been so severely, and I think so unjustly, censured.

Mr. Joseph Robson, one of the Company's servants, who resided in their factory six years as surveyor and supervisor of the buildings, in a work published by him some years since,<sup>43</sup> animadverts in very strong terms on the mode in which the governors of forts exert what he calls their uncontrollable authority, and asserts that their extreme tyranny is a perpetual source of personal disgust. He

<sup>43</sup> *An Account of Six Years' Residence in Hudson's Bay* (London, 1752).



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also says that "the overplus trade is big with iniquity, and no less inconsistent with the Company's true interest than it is injurious to the natives, who by means of it are become more and more alienated, and are either discouraged from hunting at all or induced to carry all their furs to the French." It may be necessary here to observe that the overplus trade arises from the peltry which the Company's servants obtain in barter with the natives beyond the ratio stipulated by the Company, and which belongs to themselves.

This is a heavy charge and, if true, a very proper cause of complaint; but it should seem there is not sufficient ground for the accusation, for Mr. Robson afterwards says that this overplus trade is of little advantage to them, for "that part of it they always add to the Company's stock for the sake of enhancing the merit of their services, and apply the remainder to their own use, which is often expended in bribes to screen their faults and continue them in their command." What a strange degree of folly, as well as of guilt! That the governors are so weak and so wicked as to commit enormities only to make a temporary advantage, and are obliged to distribute the wages of iniquity in order to screen themselves from its consequences among the Company, and their confederates in vice; whereas by a contrary conduct they would be equally rich, more respected, and also feel

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an inward satisfaction of mind from the consciousness of having discharged their trust with integrity; ideas too absurd to be admitted. With regard to the Company, it cannot be supposed they are ignorant of this "overplus trade," or the means by which their servants obtain the advantages arising from it. If they are not, and no impartial person will suppose they are, they not only allow but approve of the conduct of their governors, from a conviction of its being beneficial to the interests of the Company; a proper reward for the labors of their servants, or from some other motive, which because it is adopted by men so respectable and so much above reproach must be allowed to be wise and prudent.

In the next place I believe it will be very difficult to prove that the conduct of the governors has "alienated the natives from the Company's interest, and discouraged them from hunting." The former is by no means clear, as I am credibly informed the new Northwest Company,<sup>44</sup> whose trade extends to the boundaries of the settlements of the Hudson's Bay Company, find very little encouragement from the Indians. If, therefore, the natives were disgusted they would embrace the first

<sup>44</sup>The North West Company was established in 1783 by a temporary association of Montreal traders. It carried on a bitter competition with the Hudson's Bay Company until the two were united in 1821.

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opportunity of showing their dislike by carrying their peltry to new traders. Nothing can be more natural than to expect that this would be the consequence; but as they have not done so, the inference is fair that they are not disgusted. Another observation is, "that the cruel and oppressive behavior of the governors and captains towards the inferior servants not only deters useful people from engaging in the Company's service (a circumstance they should attend to for their own interest) but furnishes one pretext for the bad character that is given of the company."

Though in the particular department in which I have been many years engaged as an Indian interpreter and trader I have had few opportunities of a personal and intimate acquaintance with many of the Company's servants (having been in a commerce in direct opposition to their interest) yet I can speak with confidence in regard to some of them whom I have conversed with; that in every point of view I believe them to be useful servants, and well skilled in the language of the natives. So far, in answer to the assertion "that useful people are deterred from entering into their service." And by way of refuting the charge of "cruelty and oppression," I need only add, what none I think will deny, that they have been so well satisfied with the conduct of their superiors that many of them have

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continued in the service more than twenty years.

I believe upon the whole it will appear that the conduct of the governors at home and abroad is perfectly consistent with the true interests of the Company, and that any other mode of behavior would tend to anarchy and confusion; and I must declare for my own part that I never heard of that personal disgust which Mr. Robson so much complains of, but have rather found an anxious solicitude to be employed in their service. Mr. Carver, in his history of North America, observes that on the waters which fall into Lake Winnepeek the neighboring nations take a great many furs. Some of them they carry to the Hudson's Bay Company's factories, situated at the entrance of the Bourbon River, but this they do with reluctance on several accounts; for some of the Assinipoils and Killistinoe Indians, who usually traded with the Company's servants, told him that if they could be sure of a constant supply of goods from Michilimackinac they would not trade anywhere else; that they showed him some cloth and other articles purchased at Hudson's Bay with which they were much dissatisfied, thinking they had been greatly imposed on in the barter.

To this Mr. Carver adds, "that allowing their accounts true, he could not help joining in their opinion," but afterwards he admits "that this dissatisfaction might probably pro-

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ceed in a great measure from the intrigues of the Canadian traders; and that the method they took to withdraw the Indians from their attachment to the Hudson's Bay Company and to engage their good opinion in behalf of their new employers was by depreciating on all occasions the Company's goods, and magnifying the advantages that would arise to them from trafficking entirely with the Canadian traders. In this they too well succeeded; and from this, doubtless, did the dissatisfaction which the *Assinipoils* and *Killistinoes* [felt] proceed." "But," says he further, "another reason augmented it, the length of the journey to the Hudson's Bay factories which they informed him took up three months during the summer heats to go and return, and from the smallness of their canoes they could not carry more than one-third of the beaver they killed, so that it is not to be wondered at that the Indians should wish to have traders come to reside among them." As Mr. Carver did not travel in the interior parts as a trader, he could not have any interested commercial motives. On that account he is certainly entitled to credit as an impartial observer. The public will judge of his remarks and how far they tend to censure, or approve, the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company.

I am induced to indulge this digression in consequence of a new publication on the

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present state of the Hudson's Bay by Mr. Umfreville.<sup>45</sup>

It has unfortunately happened that the Company's enemies have been frequently of their own household, persons in whom they placed confidence and entrusted the mysteries of their commerce. Differences will naturally arise, and doubtless have arisen, between the governors and their servants, in which case no man is, or ought to be, obliged to stay in a service that is disagreeable to him; but then it is certainly sufficient to leave the employ, and highly improper to endeavor to prejudice the interest he once thought and felt it his duty to promote; and I am of opinion that not a single transaction or circumstance should be revealed that has not an immediate reference to the cause of the disagreement, or is necessary to support or vindicate a reputation. The present governors are men of great probity and probably may not condescend to take notice of these heavy charges against them; but as the most exalted virtue may be injured by groundless assertions, I trust the public will not be displeased with my endeavors, however feeble, to vindicate the character of so respectable a body. As I do not intend to enter on the subject more fully I shall only entreat the reader, if he wishes further satisfaction on this head, to peruse the publication

<sup>45</sup> Edward Umfreville, *Present State of Hudson's Bay* (London, 1790).

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of Mr. Robson, who was one of the Company's servants and whom Mr. Umfreville acknowledges to be a true and impartial writer. From his account the reader will judge of the propriety of Mr. Umfreville's censures on the conduct of the governors of the Hudson's Bay Company. A more copious examination of Mr. Umfreville's publication would exceed the limits I have prescribed to myself; and I cannot but think that those who peruse it will readily perceive how much injustice he has done to the governors and the Company.

## Chapter 13

### INDIAN CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS; RETURN TO MACKINAC

SOON after the departure of the trader, a large band, consisting of about 100, came in. My stock of rum was very small, which was a misfortune as rum is too important in treaties with the Indians to be easily dispensed with. On their arrival they wished to drink, but I continued to barter for all their furs before I gave them any rum. Having finished the business, they grew clamorous, when I gave them as much rum as I could spare, upon receipt of which they embarked in tolerable good humor.

In the month of April the last band came in and I was extremely perplexed how to act, having a very small portion of rum and no prospect of increasing my stock. I was, therefore, obliged to dilute it so as to make it about one-fifth part weaker than usual, which made twenty gallons of very passable Indian rum. Having supplied them with wearing apparel, etc., and received their peltry, I gave them a taste of the *scuttaywabo*, and just before my embarkation made the following speech:

*"Haguarmissey cockinnor an Nishinnorbay  
kee wabindan cawwickcar nin serpargussey nee*



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*zargetoone, keenerwind kaygo kee cushkendum webatch neenerwind tercushenan nepewar anna-cotchigon n̄in ojey petoone. Wa haguarmissey cockinnor meenwendesay bazam Ebeckcheck megoyyack debwoye negee kaygo arwayyor matchee oathy, kee cannawendan cockinnor, mokoman, baskeyzegan goyer becka, kee minni-quy kaygo arwayyor annascartissey woke, mor-nooch kee permartissyan cockinnor an nishinnorbay nogome debwoye negee nepewar artaway winnin ojey zargetoone an Nishinnorbay, keshpin suggermarch wennewar metach nin ojey debarchemon kitchee ojemaw awassa woity kitchee wakaygan Michilimackinac metach kaygoshish ween ojey bockettywaun keennerwind."*

—"Now my friends, take courage. I have always shown you a good heart and you all know I am full of pity for you, your wives, and children. Therefore, do not be uneasy or think the time long I shall be absent from you. I hope the Master of Life will give me courage and strength to return to you and bring you goods. Now as you know I have no sugar on my lips nor any spear at my tongue, and that my ears are not stopped nor my heart bound up, I hope you will deliver up your knives, guns, and tomahawks and have no bad heart before you begin to drink, so that on my return I may find you all well. I shall speak with courage to the great English chief at Michilimackinac and he will open his heart to you."

Having finished my speech, the weapons

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were collected and delivered to me. I then gave them a considerable quantity of rum, after which I returned their knives, etc., to convince them of the good opinion I entertained of them, and that I had no doubt but they would attend to the advice I had given them. I then got into my canoe, and waving my hand, was saluted by a discharge of 200 guns, which I returned by one volley, and pursued my journey in good spirits, heartily pleased at leaving my winter quarters.

We continued our voyage without meeting with any occurrence worth relating till we arrived at the Skunk's River, where I had unfortunately shot off a chief's ear, as I have before related. Here I met with the new-married couple, and some of the same band to whom I was so much obliged in the preceding December for singing the love songs; and being desirous of obtaining a perfect knowledge of their manners and customs, I made many inquiries, and among other knowledge gained information of the Chippewa form of courtship, which I presume will be acceptable to those who have as much curiosity as myself.

### INDIAN COURTSHIP

When an Indian wishes to take a wife, and sees one to his mind, he applies to the father of the girl and asks his consent in the following words: "*Nocey, cunner kee darmissey kee darniss nee zargayyar kakaygo O waterwardoossin*

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*cawween peccan weetty gammat ottertassey memarjis mee mor.*—"Father, I love your daughter, will you give her to me, that the small roots of her heart may entangle with mine, so that the strongest wind that blows shall never separate them."

If the father approves, an interview is appointed, for which the lover prepares by a perspiration. He then comes into her presence, sits down on the ground, and smokes his pipe. During the time of smoking he keeps throwing small pieces of wood of about an inch in length at her one by one to the number of one hundred. As many as she can catch in a bark bowl, so many presents her lover must make to her father, which he considers as payment for his daughter. The young warrior then gives a feast to which he invites all the family. When the feast is done they dance and sing their war songs. The merriment being over and mutual presents exchanged between the lover and her relations, the father covers them with a beaver robe and gives them, likewise, a new gun and a birch canoe, with which the ceremony ends.

When the French became masters of Canada, the ceremony of marriage between the savages was very fantastical.

When a lover wished his mistress to be informed of his affection he procured an interview with her, which was always at night and in the presence of some of her friends. This was conducted in the following manner:

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He entered the wigwam, the door of which was commonly a skin, and went up to the hearth on which some hot coals were burning. He then lighted a stick of wood and approaching his mistress pulled her three times by the nose to awaken her. This was done with decency and, being the custom, the squaw did not feel alarmed at the liberty. This ceremony, ridiculous as it may appear, was continued occasionally for two months, both parties behaving during the time in all other respects with the greatest circumspection.

The moment she becomes a wife she loses her liberty and is an obsequious slave to her husband, who never loses sight of his prerogative. Wherever he goes she must follow, and durst not venture to incense him by a refusal, knowing that if she neglects him extreme punishment, if not death, ensues. The chief liberty he allows her is to dance and sing in his company, and [he] is seldom known to take any more notice of her than of the most indifferent person, while she is obliged to perform the drudgery of life, which custom or insensibility enables her to do with the utmost cheerfulness.

A circumstance of this kind I recollect reading [of] which happened at Beaver Creek, about twenty-five miles from Fort Pitt. An Indian woman, observing some white men to carry firewood on their shoulders, took up her hatchet and brought them in a short time a

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great burden on her back; and throwing it down by the fire, said she not only pitied them, but thought it was a great scandal to see men doing that which was properly the work of women.

The men consider women as of no other use but to produce them children and to perform the drudgeries of life; as to the offspring, he prefers the sons to the daughters because he expects they will all prove warriors. The daughters they do not value, for the same reason that they subjugate their wives, deeming them worthy only to wait on warriors and do those things which would disgrace the male sex.

We pursued our journey to Lac le Nid au Corbeau, where we killed some wild geese and ducks, which at this season of the year have a fishy taste. Here we rested two days to enable us to pursue the remainder of our voyage with greater vigor. The third morning at daybreak we embarked and arrived at La Grande Côte de la Roche, where we were fortunate enough to kill two bears, which eat remarkably fine, and having some leisure time to spare in the cookery, we enjoyed them with as high a relish as in better situations we had done more luxuriant meals.

We proceeded to Cranberry Lake, where we caught some fish and picked as many cranberries as we could conveniently carry. From thence we continued our journey to Portage la

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Rame, where we were again windbound for some days, but during our stay we had not a single visitor to disturb us. At length the wind proving favorable, we proceeded to Rivière la Pique. On my arrival I was immediately struck with the remembrance of the escape I had [had] from *Payshik Ogashey* last year, but my mind was almost as instantly relieved by the recollection of his being killed, and no longer a terror to traders.

This was one among many instances in which I found that when the heart is oppressed with unpleasant recollections or forebodings the Author of our Being conveys relief to the mind very unexpectedly. This sudden transition we are too apt to impute to our own wisdom, and to attribute the escape from dangers we have experienced, or the hopes of deliverance which we form, entirely to our own sagacity and foresight. The Indians, on the contrary, think more properly. They say it is the Master of Life from whom we derive that presence of mind which has extricated [us] or procured us relief. To the Master of Life the Indian addresses himself even for his daily support. To him he imputes his victories and his success; and when subdued and fastened to the stake he thanks him for giving him courage to open his veins. It is this confidence which enables him to bear the severest tortures with composure, and in the height of anguish to defy the utmost malice of his enemies.

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Notwithstanding the Chippewas, as well as the greatest part of the Indian nations of North America, think so justly, it is to be lamented that it is not universally so. The *Mattaugwessawauks*, it is said, do not worship a Supreme Being, and when success attends them in war they attribute the merit of the victory to their own valor or skill. But notwithstanding their disbelief of a Master of Life, in some respects they are not less superstitious than other savages, for they think that certain places are haunted by evil spirits, whose power they dread, and impressed with these ideas cautiously avoid them. Another proof of their superstition is, if one of their people is killed by accident they preserve a hand or a foot, which they salt and dry and keep as a charm to avert calamities, by which it appears that although they do not acknowledge a dependence on a good spirit, they entertain fears and apprehensions of a bad one; which induces one to hope that such a deviation from the common belief of mankind may never be confirmed, as it would stamp human nature with an odium too horrid to think of. But to conclude this digression; we continued our voyage to Pays Plat, where we stayed some days in the society of traders who had also wintered in the inlands, and others who arrived with goods to supply those who were engaged to return; but as my time was expired I returned to Michilimackinac. After waiting on

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the commanding officer and giving an account of my stewardship to my employers, I retired to Chippewa Point, a spot of ground out of the fort, where I lived with an Indian family, who occasionally made me moccasins and other parts of Indian dress.



## Chapter 14

### AN ESCAPADE AT MACKINAC, AND EXPEDITION TO PRAIRIE DU CHIEN

**D**URING the time I remained at Chipewa Point I had frequent offers from the officers to sleep at their quarters within the fort, but being accustomed to lie in the woods I generally preferred that situation. A circumstance happened soon after my arrival, which I shall relate.

In consequence of Indian treachery in the year 1764 (when the savages commanded by Pontiac, the chief, under the pretense of a game at ball, formed a plan to destroy the inhabitants and take possession of the fort, and in which they unfortunately succeeded, to the extreme mortification of the English) there was a standing order that no Indian should be permitted to enter the fort with firearms, nor any squaw or Indian woman allowed to sleep within the walls of the garrison on any pretense whatever; and for the better security of the inhabitants, when a council is held with the chiefs double sentries are always placed.

Having a strong desire to introduce a great chief's daughter and her sister (notwithstanding the governor's orders) I communicated

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my intentions to an officer and desired his assistance to complete the plan. He very politely told me that he could not appear to countenance my scheme, but would give me every possible assistance consistent with his station. I assured him that they were a great chief's daughters, and that I would be answerable for their conduct.

With his consent I applied to two soldiers and asked them if they could spare time to roll a large hogshead of bottled porter from Chippewa Point to the fort. They told me [that] whenever it suited me they would be ready to assist. Having purchased the hogshead and got it rolled down the hill whilst the officers were at dinner, I told the squaws of my plan, and having knocked out the head and bung and bored several holes to admit as much air as possible, desired them to get in, which with some difficulty I persuaded them to do. I then replaced the head and ran immediately to the soldiers to acquaint them that the porter was ready, and desired their assistance without delay, as I was afraid some of the bottles were broken and it would be proper to examine them as soon as possible.

The soldiers immediately returned with me and applying their shoulders to the cask, rolled it up the hill with great labor and fatigue, continually observing that it was very heavy. Just as they arrived at the gate the com-

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manding officer and the commissary were coming through, and seeing the hogshead, asked the soldiers what they had got there. They replied it was bottled porter for a trader, who had desired them to roll it from the Point. As a vessel had just then arrived from the Detroit, the commanding officer was so satisfied with the account the soldiers gave that he observed it was very fortunate, for they now should have plenty of good beer to drink. The soldiers had scarcely rolled another turn when unluckily one of them kicked his foot against a stone, who with the extreme pain he suffered fell down. The other, not being able to sustain the whole weight, let go his hold and the hogshead rolled down the hill with great velocity. Just as it came to the bottom the head fell out and the squaws exhibited the deception. Unfortunately, the commanding officer was near at hand when the accident happened, and though it was a manifest breach of his orders he could not help smiling at the conceit, and looking at the imprisoned females, said to them, "Pretty bottled porter indeed!" The squaws were so confused that they ran with the utmost precipitation into the woods and did not make their appearance for several days.

On the commanding officer's return to the fort inquiry was made for me and I was under the necessity of obeying his summons,

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although I confess my situation was very unpleasant. As soon as I came into his presence, assuming a look of displeasure he asked me how I could dare to disobey the orders of the garrison, which I knew were issued to prevent the most serious consequences; that I was more culpable than another person, knowing the nature and disposition of the Indian women and the impropriety and danger of confiding in them; adding that for the sake of example, and to prevent others from acting so imprudently, he believed he should send me down to Montreal in irons.

Alarmed at my situation, I made the best apology in my power and assured him I was extremely sorry for my conduct, but hoped he would pardon it. This acknowledgment of the offense induced him to forgive me, and as he said he considered it a frolic of youth he would pass it over, but cautioned me against playing such tricks again. I felt myself extremely obliged by his lenity and promised to conduct myself with more propriety in future, which promise I faithfully kept; for though the experiment to admit the squaws would not have been attended with any bad consequences I did not choose again to risk the commanding officer's displeasure.

On the eleventh of August the traders arrived from the Mississippi and brought an account of an extraordinary escape which a Mr. Ramsay and his brother had [had] from a

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tribe of the nation of the Poes in their way to St. Joseph.<sup>46</sup>

The Poes are a very wild, savage people, have an aversion to Englishmen, and generally give them as much trouble as possible in passing or repassing the Fort of St. Joseph's, where some French traders are settled by their permission.

It seems the Canadians were invited by the savages to land, and Mr. Ramsay, supposing they had some furs to dispose of, ordered his men to go on shore; when standing up in his canoe just before his debarkation, three of the warriors waded through the water neck-high, dragged him out of his canoe, and carried him on shore. Mr. Ramsay's men immediately landed and were preparing to follow their master, but observing eleven Indians near at hand and perceiving the bad intention of the chiefs, got again into their canoes, leaving the one in which Mr. Ramsay and his son were on the beach, and paddled to an adjacent island, waiting the event of a circumstance which threatened death to their masters.

Mr. Ramsay being tied to the stump of a tree, and his son narrowly watched, the Indians rummaged the canoe and brought up as much rum as they thought they could

<sup>46</sup> The "Poes" were the Potawatomi tribe, which has played so large a rôle in the pioneer history of the Old Northwest. Fort St. Joseph was in the outskirts of modern Niles, Michigan.

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drink. They then began to sing their war songs, and making a large fire near the stump to which Mr. Ramsay was tied, they sat down on the ground and began to insult him, telling him he was an old woman, and obliged his brother to join in the derision.

The usual mode of execution among the savages is as follows:

When a warrior is taken, he is brought into a hut and tied with small cords made of the bark of trees, about the size of a cod-line. He is then fastened to a stump and a small rattle put into his hand, called *chessaquoy*, which he shakes while he sings the dead war song:

*"Wabindan payshik shenagonish kitchee Manitoo; nee wee waybenan neeyoe Matchee Mannitoo."*

"Master of Life, view me well as a warrior; I have thrown away my body against the bad spirit."

When the song is finished the prisoner is untied and made to run the gauntlet through two ranks of women, who are provided with small sticks to beat him. After this punishment a dog-feast is prepared with bear's grease and huckleberries, of which he is obliged to eat. He is then brought again to the stake, when wood is placed round him. He now sings his war song and the women set fire to the pile, the prisoner singing as it burns. The bones are then collected and fixed to the war-standard, which is a high pole painted with vermilion.

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It is said that the nation of the *Followens*, or Wild Oats,<sup>47</sup> kill their wives and children before they go to battle, that in case of a defeat the enemy shall not have any prisoners of their nation.

The Poes, beginning to feel the effects of the rum, examined the cords, which were made of the bark of the willow-tree, and ordered some wood to be put round the stump, to be ready when they should find themselves disposed to burn him. Soon after they untied him and brought him to the war-kettle to make his death-feast, which consisted of dog, tiger-cat, and bear's grease mixed with wild oats, of which he was compelled to eat. Mr. Ramsay, knowing the nature of Indians, complied with seeming cheerfulness and said he was satisfied. He was taken back to the intended place of execution and tied again to the stump, from which with great composure he desired permission to make his speech before he changed his climate, which being granted, he immediately spoke to them to the following effect:

"It is true the Master of Life has sent me here to those Indians whose hearts are full of poisoned blood, and as they mean me to change my climate I shall go with courage to a better trading-ground, where I shall find good Indians. They have always known me to have had pity on them, their wives, and

<sup>47</sup>The Menominee tribe, whose home was in the vicinity of Green Bay.

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children since I have been a trader, and to have opened my heart to them on all occasions; but now the bad spirit has joined his heart with theirs to make me change my climate, which I am glad of for I am better known in the country I am going to, and by greater warriors than ever these were. I now look on all the chiefs as old women; and as I am the *Peshshekey* (or buffalo) I shall drink my last with them, and carry the news to the warriors in the other climate."

Having attentively heard his speech, they prepared for his death; which he perceiving, immediately told his brother not to be disheartened as he had hopes of overcoming their fury, and desired him to ply them with rum and keep their kettles constantly filled. His brother followed the instructions he gave him, and distributed the rum among them very plentifully. When Mr. Ramsay discovered that they were sufficiently intoxicated to be incapable of doing mischief, he desired his brother to cut his cords; and being released, assisted in pouring rum down their throats till they were quite insensible. Fired with resentment at their intended barbarity, he and his brother cut all their throats, loaded his canoe with the articles they had taken out, and paddled from shore as fast as they could. The men hailed him at some distance, and were rejoiced to see him safe; and after arranging their cargo, [they] pursued their



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journey into the Indian country by a different course.

I was informed Mr. Ramsay returned afterwards to Michilimackinac, where he was congratulated by the commanding officer on his fortunate escape, but he never thought it prudent to go that route again.

About this time the Indian traders formed a company of militia, which I joined with the rank of adjutant and lieutenant, under Captain John Macnamara. In the month of June, 1780 news was brought from the Mississippi that the Indian traders had deposited their furs at *La Prairie des Chiens*, or Dogs' Field (where there is a town of considerable note, built after the Indian manner), under the care of Mons. Longlad, the king's interpreter;<sup>48</sup> and that the Americans were in great force at the Illinois, a town inhabited by different nations, at the back of the Kentucky state, under the Spanish government, who have a fort on the opposite shore, commanded by an officer and about twelve men, to prevent illicit trade.

The commanding officer at Michilimackinac asked me to accompany a party of Indians and Canadians to the Mississippi, which I

<sup>48</sup> *Prairie du Chien*, at the mouth of the Wisconsin River, had been from time immemorial an important rendezvous of Indian intercourse and commerce. Its permanent white settlement seems to date from 1781. On Charles Langlade, see Alexander Henry's *Travels and Adventures*, pp. 80-87, 93-94.

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consented to with the utmost cheerfulness. We left the post<sup>49</sup> with thirty-six southern Indians of the Ottiguamie and Sioux nations, and twenty Canadians, in nine large birch canoes, laden with Indian presents. After a march of three days I was taken ill, which I attributed to hard living in the Nipigon country. Considering, however, the urgency of the business, and that there was not anyone of the party capable of acting as interpreter, I struggled with my indisposition; apprehending, also, that if I could not pursue the journey I should be exposed to great inconveniences; and therefore I increased my endeavors, determined to risk my life at all hazards.

The fourth day we encamped at Lac les Puants,<sup>50</sup> so called, I apprehend, from the Indians who reside on the banks being naturally filthy. Here we got plenty of deer and bears, Indian corn, melons, and other fruit. The southern Indians have more villages and are better civilized than the northern, the climate being warm and nature more prolific, which enables them to raise the fruits of the earth without much labor. Their houses are covered with birch bark and decorated with

<sup>49</sup> Of this expedition, which forms one phase of the hostile operations between the British partisans in the Northwest and the Spaniards of upper Louisiana in the closing years of the Revolutionary War, Long's narrative is our best account.

<sup>50</sup> Modern Green Bay.

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bows and arrows and weapons of war. Their beds are bark and mats made of rushes.

We pursued our voyage to Ouisconsin, a fine river with a strong current for about sixty leagues, which our canoes ran down in a day and a half, and upon which we saw an immense quantity of ducks, geese, and other fowl. On this river we were obliged to unload our canoes in order to transport our goods across the portage, about two miles in length. We encamped on the banks and intended setting off at break of day, but one of the Indians was bitten by a rattlesnake, which Mr. Adair calls the bright inhabitant of the woods, and which had fourteen rattles.

Mr. Beatty relates that as he was preaching to the Indians and others at a small house near Juniata River, a rattlesnake crept into the room, but was happily discovered and killed; and before the people could well recover themselves, a snake of another kind was discovered among the assembly, which was also killed without any other detriment than disturbing the congregation, which surprised him very much, as it was a matter of astonishment how these reptiles could crawl into the house without being offended by some one, and which always excites them to bite.

The Indians say that when a woman is in labor, holding the tail of a rattlesnake in her hand and shaking the rattles assists her delivery. It is always observable that the Indians

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take out the bag which contains the poisons of the venomous reptile and carry it alive in their medicine-box when they go to war.

This unfortunate accident retarded our journey until the unhappy sufferer relieved himself by cutting out the wounded part from the calf of his leg, and applying salt and gunpowder and binding it up with the leaves of the red willow tree. He was soon able to proceed, bearing the pain with that fortitude for which the savages are so eminently distinguished.

At the close of the next day we encamped near the river and it rained very hard; the Indians made some bark huts. One of them, walking some distance in the woods, discovered a small log-house, in which he found a white man with his arms cut off, lying on his back. We conjectured he had been settled at the spot, and killed by a bad Indian, which must have happened very recently as he was not putrid. Before our departure we buried him.

The next day we arrived at the Forks of the Mississippi,<sup>51</sup> where were 200 Indians of the nation of the Renards, or Foxes, on horseback, armed with spears, bows and arrows. They did not seem pleased with our appearance,<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> That is, at the mouth of the Wisconsin.

<sup>52</sup> Due to the effective work of George Rogers Clark, by whose efforts these Indians had been won over to the American interest. See Clark's *Conquest of the Illinois*, published in the Lakeside Classics series for 1920.

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which *Warbishar*, the chief of our band, told me. Just before we landed they dismounted and surveyed us. The Sioux asked me if I was afraid. I told them that I had seen a greater number of savages before, and more wild than any of the southern Indians. *Warbishar*<sup>53</sup> gave orders to strike ashore. As soon as we landed the Renards took our Indians by the hand and invited them into their camp. In the space of an hour they prepared a feast, which consisted of five Indian dogs, bear, beaver, deer, mountain cat, and raccoon, boiled in bear's grease and mixed with huckleberries. After the repast the Indians danced and sang. A council was then held, when the chief of the Renards addressed *Warbishar* to this effect:

"Brothers, we are happy to see you. We have no bad heart against you. Although we are not the same nation by language, our hearts are the same. We are all Indians, and are happy to hear our Great Father has pity on us and sends us wherewithal to cover us and enable us to hunt."

To which *Warbishar* made answer: "It is true, my children, our Great Father has sent me this way to take the furs and skins that are in the Dogs' Field, under Captain Longlad's charge, lest the Long Knives (meaning the Americans) should plunder them. I am

<sup>53</sup> This was Wabasha, a noted Sioux chief of Minnesota, who sided with the British in the Revolutionary War.

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come with the white man (meaning me) to give you wherewithal to cover you and ammunition to hunt."

When the speech was finished we immediately distributed the presents, got our canoes into the water, and left the Renards in the most friendly manner.

After seven days' journey we arrived at La Prairie des Chiens,<sup>54</sup> where we found the merchants' peltry in packs, in a log-house guarded by Captain Longlad and some Indians, who were rejoiced to see us. After resting some time, we took out about 300 packs of the best skins and filled the canoes. Sixty more which remained, we burned, to prevent the enemy from taking them, having ourselves no room to stow any more, and proceeded on our journey back to Michilimackinac. About five days after our departure we were informed that the Americans came to attack us, but to their extreme mortification we were out of their reach. Seventeen days after leaving La Prairie des Chiens, we arrived at Lac les Puants, where we found a party of Indians encamped. The next day we embarked and arrived at Michilimackinac after an absence of eighty days. Soon after my return I waited on the commanding officer, expecting payment for my services; but

<sup>54</sup> Some slight confusion is evident in the narrative at this point, for the story of the arrival at Prairie du Chien has already been told.

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was referred for satisfaction to the Indian traders, from whom I never received any compensation.

By this means I was left destitute even of the necessaries of life; but I did not remain long in this uncomfortable situation, for I soon found protection and support among the Indians; but as their assistance would not afford the means to appear in civil society, I was under the necessity of soliciting friendship from the merchants to enable me to return to Montreal, which I fortunately obtained. I left Michilimackinac in the beginning of September and arrived at Montreal on the twenty-seventh of the same month.

I embraced the first opportunity to call on my old master, expecting to find him in good health, but alas! he had paid the debt of nature, and was succeeded by his nephew, who had been contemporary clerk with me. He permitted me to lodge at his house for a fortnight, but a few days after my abode with him, my situation being different from what I had experienced during the life of my old master, I asked him to fit me out with an assortment of goods for the Indian trade, and promised to remit him payment in furs. He told me I was welcome to any goods he had in his store that would suit me, but on examining the stock all the merchandise proper for the savages was disposed of, and nothing left that would answer any profitable purpose.

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I then left his house, returning him thanks for his civility; and having procured pecuniary assistance from a friend, took lodgings in the town, where I stayed some time. I then went to Quebec, where a gentleman accidentally hearing that I was out of employ, and knowing that I could speak the Indian languages, sent for me and engaged me in his service, to go among the Indians at Lake Temiscaming<sup>55</sup> or any other situation I might think most eligible for commerce.

<sup>55</sup>North of Lake Ontario, near the headwaters of Ottawa River.



## Chapter 15

### EXPEDITION TO THE SAGUENAY COUNTRY

**B**EING furnished with a proper assortment of merchandise, I left Quebec and proceeded to Tadoussac, which is at the end of the Saguenay River, near the River St. Lawrence. About nine miles from Quebec there is a village inhabited by the Loretto Indians, who are properly of the nation of the Hurons. They embraced Christianity through the means of the Jesuits, and followed the Catholic religion. The women have remarkably good voices and sing hymns in their own language most charmingly. They cultivate the ground and bring the produce to market; and in their manners they are the most innocent and harmless of all the savages in North America. Their houses are decent and built after the Canadian fashion. They are an exception to the generality of Indians, seldom drinking any spirituous liquors. They are for the most part tall, robust people, and well shaped; have short black hair, which is shaved off the forehead from ear to ear, and wear neither caps nor hats. With regard to their beards, though they are scarcely visible, they have them in common with all the tribes of savages; but having an aversion to excres-

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cences, they carefully pluck out every hair from the upper jaw and chin with brass wire, which they twist together in the form of pincers; and it is well known that all traders carry out that article of commerce for this express purpose.

Baron de Lahontan seems to have been much mistaken when, in speaking of the savages, he says that they have no beards. Lord Kaims<sup>56</sup> was also in the same error, when he asserted there is not a single hair on an Indian's body excepting the eyelashes, eyebrows and hair of the head, and that there is no appearance of a beard.

This observation, Mr. James Adair remarks, is utterly void of foundation, as can be attested by all who have had any communication with them; and Major Robert Rogers,<sup>57</sup> who certainly knew the Indians as well as any man, says that they totally destroy their beards, which proves beyond a doubt that they are not naturally *imbarbes*.

I have been led into these observations from the perusal of Lord Kaims' *Sketches of Man*,

<sup>56</sup> Henry Horne, Lord Kames, *Sketches of History of Man* (Edinburgh, 1774).

<sup>57</sup> Major Robert Rogers of New England was a noted ranger in the French and Indian War. He was later appointed Governor of Michilimackinac, where his rule proved most unfortunate. He wrote one of the earliest American plays, *A Concise Account of North America* (to which Long here makes allusion), and one or two other works.

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who not only insists that the Indians have no beards, but builds on the hypothesis to prove a local creation.

Tadoussac is on the sea side north of the River St. Lawrence, and inhabited by a few Indians called mountaineers, who live chiefly on fish; and one trader, clerk to the gentleman in whose service I was engaged.

There is a French clergyman and a church for the Indians, who are all Catholics. At this village I remained a fortnight, during which time the American privateers were continually cruising about. One morning there was a great fog, but we could just discern at a small distance a vessel: this alarmed the priest and the Indians. My brother Englishman (the trader who was settled here) joined with me in soliciting the Indians to stand their ground, which the priest strongly opposed, though paid by the British government. This incensed me, and I insisted on taking some of his flock with me to reconnoitre and endeavor to discover what vessel she was, though I had strong suspicions she was an American privateer. We went towards the shore, but could not discover the number of guns she mounted. We returned to our camp and all the Indians at my request accompanied me to attack her. We embarked in canoes, dressed alike, and as we approached perceived she lay at anchor and was a vessel of inconsiderable force, mounting only eight small swivels. I immediately went

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on one side of her and directed the Indians to the other, to inclose her as much as we could. Having reached the vessel, I took hold of a rope and went on board. The Captain was alarmed, and his fears were increased when he saw himself surrounded with canoes, filled with savages armed with guns and tomahawks. However, he advanced towards me and clapping me on the shoulder asked what I wanted. I was too politic to make any reply at that time. He then asked me if I would have some biscuit. I replied, "*Caween*," or, "No." He shook his head, as much as to say "I wish I could know what you want." The Indians then came on board, and the Captain, having only seven men and our number being upwards of forty, well armed, did not know how to act, but probably willing to please me, ordered his men to get some biscuit and rum. Whilst the sailors were gone I perceived she was an English vessel, and then asked the Captain in English to whom she belonged. He was agreeably surprised, told me his name was Allcrow, and that he commanded the *Mercury*, packet of Quebec. This information gave me occasion to rejoice we did not take rough means; and when I communicated the intelligence to the Indians they were highly pleased and shook hands with the Captain.

The Captain then accompanied us to shore in our canoes and we landed at our encamp-

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ment. We afterwards went to the priest's house, where we dined. Mr. Martin, the priest, and myself were invited on board the next day, when we had an excellent repast, with plenty of wine and other liquors. Unfortunately we drank too freely, and returning in the evening, the priest began to be very angry with me for encouraging the savages. This reprehension, with his former conduct, incensed me exceedingly and in the heat of passion I threw him overboard, but by the assistance of the sailors he was saved. On our landing, our contest led us to blows, but we were soon parted. When we were recovered from intoxication we shook hands, and afterwards remained good friends.

The next day the Indians were seized with an epidemic fever, which deprived them of the use of their limbs and occasioned a delirium. The disorder attacked me very severely, but by the friendly assistance of Mr. Martin, who had a medicine chest, in about three weeks I recovered.

The winter now advancing very rapidly, and the unavoidable delay at this post obliged me to proceed on my journey on snowshoes, carrying all my goods on Indian sleighs through the woods and over high mountains. We travelled twenty-one days on a deep snow, about 100 leagues through the Saguenay country, which was very fatiguing, till we arrived at a place called

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Checootimy.<sup>58</sup> About half way up the river on which it stands the salt water ebbs and flows. Only a few Indians reside here, and one Indian trader, with whom I wintered and hunted, killing a great many animals. Early in the spring I took my leave of him, and being furnished with canoes, pursued my journey to St. John's Lake; from thence to Panebacash River, to Lake Shaboomoochoine, which lies northeast of Lake Arbitibis about the distance of seven days' Indian march.

Near the falls of Panebacash River I landed and ascended a high mountain, to survey a large cave, about 200 yards deep and three yards wide at the mouth. Here I picked up a piece of ore about three inches square. The exterior crust was black and very thin and when broken appeared yellow. I brought it to Quebec, but by some accident lost it, which I lamented exceedingly, as some of my friends to whom I showed it were of opinion that it was very valuable.

The journey was farther inland by nearly eighty leagues than any trader had ever been, the only settlement in that part of Canada being at St. Peter's Lake, where a French house was formerly established, and where an English trader who was employed by the merchants in whose service I was engaged resided.

<sup>58</sup> Chicoutimi is at the head of navigation on the Saguenay River.

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I arrived at Lake Shaboomoochoine on the twenty-sixth of May, 1781, where I intended to stay only a few days; but some Indians arrived who assured me that it would answer my purpose to winter, and promised to supply me with fish, furs, and skins. This induced me to remain here, and I built a house suitable for my business, and kept two Indians with their wives to hunt for me.

On the twenty-ninth we set our nets, and in about four hours caught abundance of large trout, pike, maskenonjey, pickerel, and whitefish, and as the country abounded with wild fowl we were never without two courses at table, with roots for garden stuff.

On the seventeenth of June a band of Indians arrived, who were agreeably surprised to see a trader at a place where no one had settled before, and they were particularly delighted when they heard me speak their own language.

During my residence here I saw a great many snakes; and one day in particular as I was walking in the woods I discovered one of those reptiles in the grass. The instant I perceived it I cut a long stick and dropped it gently on the snake's head; it immediately moved, and I could hear the rattles very distinctly. Whilst I was surveying the brightness of its colors, which were inexpressibly beautiful, it was coiling itself round like a rope to dart at me. This warned me of my

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danger, and I took [hold of] the taper end of the stick and let the heavy end fall on its head. The weight of the blow stunned it, and seizing this opportunity I struck it again, which killed it. I measured it and judged the length to be at least five feet and a half, and the thickest part about four inches in circumference, with nine rattles on its tail, which agreeably to the general observation made his age nine years; but I believe this is not an established fact, as it is uncertain at what time the rattle begins to appear.

The flesh of this reptile is delicious, and I have frequently eaten of it with great *goût*. I have seen the Indians poison it with the juice of tobacco.

Whilst I am on the subject, though not quite connected with it, I shall make some observation on the turkey and black water snake.

The turkey snake is longer than the rattlesnake, with stripes on the back, and a spear at the end of its tail like an anchor, and a double row of teeth in each jaw. It takes its name from its voice, which resembles the note of a wild turkey. In the Mississippi [country] it feeds on wild rice, which grows among long grass, bearing its head frequently erect, and makes a noise like a turkey to decoy it. As the bird approaches, the snake darts its tail into it, and makes it an easy prey.

The black water snake is used by the Indians when they go to war. They pull out the teeth,



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tie the head and tail together, and fasten [it] round their bodies, which soon kills it. They take it off every night, and put it on every morning.

In travelling from Toniata Creek on the River St. Lawrence, to Pimetiscotyon Landing on Lake Ontario, I saw one of these snakes swimming with a flat fish in its mouth, which I had the good fortune to shoot, and released the prisoner from the jaws of death.

I kept a flag constantly flying at my little fort, which the Indians paid respect to by a salute from their guns. The band who were at this time with me held a council and made me a present of two very large beaver robes and several valuable skins, with plenty of provisions, for which I supplied them with tobacco, rum, trinkets, and ammunition. Two days after, they left me and desired me to wait their return, which I promised, provided they would bring me furs and skins to load the canoes, and they should be repaid with Indian goods. As I depended on their punctuality, I remained perfectly satisfied.

I was then left with two white men and two Indians and their wives. We passed our time in hunting and fishing, and as there were a great many small islands near us, we made frequent trips to shoot wild fowl, which enabled us to keep a good table. On one of the islands we discovered two Indian huts, but from their appearance no person had visited

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them for a [great] length of time. About half a mile from the place we saw a high pole, daubed over with vermilion paint; on the top were placed three human skulls, and the bones hung round. The Indians supposed it had been erected many years. About an hour before sunset we returned to our wigwam. The next morning, in the absence of the Indians, the Canadians assisted me in mixing the rum and assorting the goods, to be prepared against the arrival of the savages and to fill up the time, which hung heavy on our hands.

On the twenty-fourth of June a band of Indians arrived from Lake Arbitibis, who brought a considerable quantity of excellent furs and skins, with dried meat, which I bartered for. When the bargain was made I gave them some rum, as usual upon such occasions, which after their long march highly delighted them. They drank very plentifully, as I had exceeded the common donation, but their cargo deserved it; and I always found it my interest to be generous to them upon a barter.

On their departure, taking an Indian for my guide I made a visit to a brother trader 150 miles from my settlement. I stayed with him about a fortnight, and was on the point of returning when two Indians came to inform me, by the desire of my Canadians, that a band of savages waited for me. In about five days we returned, and I bartered for all their furs.

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On the sixteenth of July about fifty savages came with their spring hunt, which I also bartered for, though the peltry was very inferior to what is collected in winter; but as I was determined to make as good a season as possible, I was eager to avail myself of every opportunity to increase my stock.

The latter end of the month the band who had promised to return came in and fulfilled their promise, bringing a large quantity of furs, which, with the stock I had collected during their absence, was as much as my canoes would hold. They also brought intelligence that the Hudson's Bay Company had been pillaged of their furs by the French.<sup>59</sup>

Early in the month of August I made up my packs and embarked for Quebec, where I arrived in about six weeks, to the great joy of my employers, who, from my long absence, were very uneasy; however, the cargo fully satisfied them, and convinced them of my industry and integrity in their service. Being persuaded I had undergone great fatigue, they made me a handsome present above my salary, and I quitted their service and the Indian life with a resolution to endeavor to procure an employ less hazardous, and where I could partake of the pleasures of society with less fatigue, both of body and mind.

I remained some time at Quebec and in-

<sup>59</sup> The allusion is to the capture of York Factory and Fort Prince of Wales by the expedition of La Pérouse.

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tended to pass my winter there, but my money being nearly exhausted and my mind not reconciled to another Indian voyage, I returned to Montreal, where I found friends to supply my wants till the spring following.

## Chapter 16

### FURTHER VICISSITUDES OF THE AUTHOR

IN May I took a trip to Fort George, situated on a lake of the same name, called by the French *Saint Sacrement*, where I stayed with some of the Mohawks who were encamped there. In the beginning of the French and Indian War, in 1757, there was a remarkable instance of resolution and cool, deliberate courage in one of these savages, occasioned by a sentence being passed upon a soldier to receive 500 lashes for intoxication.

An Indian, known by the name of Silver Heels from his superior agility, as well as his admirable finesse in the art of war, and who had killed more of the enemy than anyone [else] of the tribes in alliance with Great Britain, accidentally came in to the fort just before the soldier was to receive his punishment, and expressed his displeasure that a man should be so shamefully disgraced. He went up to the commanding officer and asked him what crime the soldier had committed. The officer, not choosing to be questioned, ordered one of his men to send Silver Heels away, and to inform him that the company of Indians was not agreeable on such occasions. "Wa! wa!" or, "Oh! oh!" replied the savage,

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"but what is the warrior tied up for?" "For getting drunk," answered the soldier. "Is that all?" said Silver Heels. "Then provide another set of halberts and tie up your chief, for he gets drunk twice a day." Having said so he instantly left the fort, telling the soldier he should quickly return to endeavor to prevent the punishment being inflicted. Soon after the delinquent was tied up, and the drummers in waiting to obey orders, Silver Heels returned, and going up to the officer, with a tomahawk and scalping-knife, said to him, "Father, are you a warrior, or do you only think yourself so? If you are brave, you will not suffer your men to strike this soldier whilst I am in this fort. Let me advise you not to spill the good English blood which tomorrow may be wanted to oppose an enemy." The officer, turning upon his heel, answered with an indignant look that the soldier had transgressed and must be flogged. "Well!" replied Silver Heels, "then flog him and we shall soon see whether you are as brave a warrior as an Indian."

About two days after, the officer was riding some distance from the fort, and Silver Heels was lying flat on his stomach, according to his usual custom when he watched to surprise an enemy. The officer passed without perceiving him, when he instantly sprang up and laying hold of the horse's bridle, told the officer to dismount and fight him. The officer, judging

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it improper to risk his life against a savage, refused to dismount and endeavored to spur his horse. Silver Heels, perceiving his intention, tomahawked the horse, who fell down suddenly, and the officer rolled on the ground without being hurt. "Now," says Silver Heels, "we are on equal terms, and as you have a brace of pistols and a sword you cannot have any objection to fight me." The officer still refusing, Silver Heels told him that he thought himself a warrior when he ordered one of his white slaves to be flogged for a breach of martial law, but that he had now forgotten the character he then assumed or he certainly would have fought him; and looking very sternly, added that he had a great mind to make him change his climate; but as that mode of proceeding would not answer his purpose, and sufficiently expose him among his brother warriors, he might walk home as soon as he pleased; and that tomorrow morning he would come to the fort with the horse's scalp and relate the circumstance. The officer was rejoiced to escape so well, though he was obliged to walk a distance of three miles.

The next morning Silver Heels arrived and asked to see the officer, but was denied admission into his presence. Some of his brother officers came out and inquired his business. He related to them the circumstance between the officer and himself, and exhibited the trophy, adding that tomorrow he intended going

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to war, and should make a point of taking an old woman prisoner, whom he should send to take the command of the fort, as the great chief was only fit to fight with his dog or cat, when he was eating, lest they should have more than him. Then, asking for some rum (which was given him) he left the fort to fulfill his promise, but was soon after killed in an engagement, fighting manfully at the head of a party of Mohawks near the Bloody Pond, joining to Lord Loudon's Road, in the way to Albany.

Just before the frost set in I returned to Montreal and visited my old Cahnuaga friends, where I amused myself in the Indian way, as I always preferred their society to the Canadians. Notwithstanding, I occasionally mixed in more civilized amusements, and as I danced tolerably well my company was generally sought after.

The Canadians are particularly fond of dancing, from the seigneur to the habitant; and though the meaner sort of people do not excel in it, there is a peculiar ease and careless indifference, which, though it appears too rustic, is far from being disagreeable. The beverage on those occasions is sour Spanish red wine, called black strap; and this, homely as it would be thought in more refined assemblies, is there considered as a very handsome manner of treating their friends.

The winter being passed, I determined to



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go to Quebec and endeavor to get a passage to England, not having any prospect of a permanent settlement in Canada. On my arrival I put up at a tavern and lived as moderately as possible, from necessity more than inclination; for everyone knows that Indian traders, like sailors, are seldom sufficiently prudent to save much money. Fortunately for me, I met with an old schoolfellow at Quebec, a captain of a ship, whom I had not seen for sixteen years. To him I communicated my distressed situation, and by him was generously relieved. In addition to this act of kindness, he promised me a free passage to England on board his vessel, which offer I accepted with pleasure and gratitude.

Having fixed the time of his departure, I took the post and went to Montreal to settle my affairs. I then returned to Quebec, from whence we sailed the eleventh day of October, 1783 and put into Newfoundland. When we came in sight of harbor several of us requested permission to take the long boat and row on shore, which was granted; but it being a dead calm, we made very little way. We had not left the ship more than a league when a southwest wind sprang up and retarded us considerably. In the evening the wind abated, and with hard rowing we reached the shore about midnight, both fatigued and hungry. Early in the morning the ship came into harbor, and had suffered some damage by beating about in

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the night, which induced the captain to dispose of the cargo. On the ninth of November we left Newfoundland on board another vessel. Our passage was favorable, without any remarkable occurrence, and we arrived in London the thirtieth of the same month.

My native city, upon my arrival, appeared like a new world to me, having been absent from England fifteen years, and it was with difficulty I found any of my old friends, the greatest part of them in such a length of time being dead.

In February, 1784 I entered into an engagement with a relation to return to Canada, and being furnished with a cargo, left London on the fifteenth of April following. On the twentieth we got under way and put into Portsmouth to take in wines. After a bad and tedious passage of eleven weeks we arrived safe at Quebec, from whence my goods were sent to Montreal in small craft. Unfortunately the season was too far advanced to suffer me to attempt going to Michilimackinac and wintering in the inlands, as I had no prospect of providing suitable canoes; nor were my goods properly assorted, and there was not time sufficient to arrange them, so as to make the intended voyage. This induced me to consult a friend upon the occasion, who advised me to dispose of my goods at public vendue, which I did at very great loss, so that I could only remit my friend in London a very

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small sum in part of payment. In this adventure nothing succeeded to my wishes, for by my credulity and being willing to retrieve, if possible, the loss I had sustained, I soon increased my difficulties, so that in a few months after my arrival, all my schemes failing, I was left totally destitute.

In February, 1785 I quitted Montreal and walked from La Prairie to St. John's, where I accidentally found a friend who supplied me with money to go to New York. I proceeded to Stony Point, where I stayed two days with some Loyalist officers, some of whom accompanied me to Crown Point, where we also stayed three days. We then parted company and I hired a sleigh which carried me safely to New York, where I took a lodging and lived as moderately as I could.

During my residence there I met a Loretto savage, called Indian John, who had been in the American service all the war, and who waited to receive a reward for his fidelity, as the Congress were then sitting. He told me he had been at war for them nine years, had killed a great many of their enemies, and had only received a gun, two blankets, three pieces of Indian gartering, and one hundred dollars in paper money, which he could not make use of; and as I understood his language, he desired me to render him service by interpreting for him to the Governor. I desired him to call at my lodgings, and in the meantime I wrote down

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the circumstances he had related to me, that I might be prepared in case I was sent for at a short notice.

A few days after, he explained to me more fully the nature of his claim and how he had been trifled with by Congress. I asked him his reasons for engaging in the American service. He told me that at the commencement of the war the Big Knives (meaning the Americans) had advised him to turn his heart from the English and promised to supply all his wants; and, as an additional inducement, that they would pay a better price for a scalp than had been usually given, and at the close of the war he should have land and stock sufficient to maintain himself and family; but he was now convinced they only meant to serve themselves. as he had frequently applied for a performance of their promises without success; and that he was determined to get satisfaction some way or other.

I told him I was not sorry for his disappointment; that he was a bad Indian for deserting his good father, who lived on the other side the great water and who was universally beloved by all who knew him, particularly by the Loretto nation; and as the subjects of this great and good father lived near his village and gave every proof of their love and friendship to his nation, which he could not be ignorant of, I was surprised that he should suffer his heart to be moved by the changeable

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winds, and was sorry to add that I believed he was the only Loretto Indian with two minds, and therefore I was unwilling to say anything in his behalf before Congress.

These remarks on his conduct seemed to affect him, and he replied that he hoped, notwithstanding he had deserted the cause of his great father, he should find me his friend to attend him when his affair should be taken under consideration by Congress, as he had not anyone in New York who could serve him so essentially. I told him that in spite of my just displeasure, his situation had melted my heart and I would not refuse his request.

In about four days he came to acquaint me that Congress were then sitting, and he believed they would pay his demand if I would go with him and interpret to the Governor; but having taken an active part against the Americans during the war, I would willingly have been excused. On his urging my promise to him, I could not resist, and immediately accompanied him to the council, where Governor Franklin was president, who asked me if I knew Indian John. I told him, only by seeing him at New York, and that I came at his particular request to speak in his behalf. He desired me to assure the Indian that he might depend on having his demand satisfied in a few days, and to make his mind easy. This I communicated to him, with which he seemed perfectly satisfied.

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. Soon after, he was sent for and he received an order on a merchant for one hundred dollars, which being presented for payment, was not honored. This incensed John, and he desired me to tell the merchant that the Congress and their agents were all thieves. The merchant excused himself by saying that the treasury was very poor, and could not immediately satisfy every demand.

The next day John went again to the Governor and having acquainted him with the refusal of the draft, received an order on another merchant, which was duly honored. John's heart was quite elated, and in less than ten days he had disposed of all the money, like a true Indian, principally in drink.

My interference in favor of the Indian made me well known and procured me an introduction to a respectable mercantile house, from which I got credit for the Indian trade. Having arranged my cargo I proceeded in a vessel to Albany, where I arrived on the eighteenth of June. At this place I unloaded my goods and got them conveyed in a wagon to Schenectady, where I purchased two boats. On the sixth of July I proceeded up the Mohawk River to the German Flats, where I stayed three days, during which time a band of Oneida Indians came and solicited me to winter at their village, which was about ten days' march from Fort Stanwix. I complied with their request and set off with twenty-

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eight horses to carry my baggage, being obliged to travel through the woods, and sold my boats to satisfy those from whom I hired the horses. I arrived safe at the village with all my goods, but finding the plan was not likely to turn out advantageously, after a residence with them [of] three weeks, I bartered for the few skins they had and having repurchased my boats, I left my Indian friends, proceeding immediately to the Genesee Lake, where I arrived on the fourteenth of September.

Having landed and secured my goods I ordered my men to prepare a house. The chiefs, on hearing of my arrival, assembled and came up to me, accompanied by their young men, expecting presents, which I was obliged to make; and I asked permission to stay on their ground. Some consented, and others disapproved; at the last, after consulting each other, they told me I might go on with the building. The men immediately proceeded with cheerfulness and despatch, in hopes of finishing the business before their return; but how transitory are all human events! Whilst the men were at work some Indians came in great haste to desire my attendance at the council fire, which was at a small distance from my intended place of residence. I obeyed the summons and sat down by the chiefs, when one of them rose up, and addressed me to the following effect:

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“You are the sugar, for so you are called in our tongue, but you must not have too much sweetness on your lips. All the Oneida Indians say they have heard that you are only come under a pretense to get our lands from us; but this must not be. My young warriors will not suffer any Englishman to settle here. You are like the great chief, General Johnson, who asked for a spot of ground, or large bed, to lie on; and when Hendrick, the chief of the Mohawks, had granted his request, he got possession of a great quantity of our hunting grounds; and we have reason to think that you intend to dream us out of our natural rights. We loved Sir William and therefore consented to all his requests; but you are a stranger, and must not take these liberties. Therefore, my advice is that you depart tomorrow at break of day, or you will be plundered by the young warriors and it will not be in our power to redress you.”

As I have mentioned a council, I shall describe the form of a house erected for that purpose near Fort Pitt.

The building is long, with two fires in it at a proper distance from each other, without any chimney or partition. The entry into the house is by two doors, one at each end. Over the door the figure of a turtle was drawn, which is the ensign of the particular tribe. On each door-post was cut out the face of an old man, an emblem of that gravity and wisdom



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that every senator ought to be possessed of. On each side, the whole length of the house within, is a platform or bed five feet wide, raised above the floor one foot and a half, made of broad pieces of wood split, which serves equally for a bed to sleep on and a place to sit down. It is covered with a handsome mat made of rushes, and at the upper end of the building the king or great chief sat.

To return from this digression: We baled up our goods and proceeded to Fort Oswego, which I attempted to pass, but was prevented by a sentinel, who informed me that no bateau with goods could pass without the commanding officer's permission. I told him I was not an American, and would wait on him to know if he had issued such orders. I travelled in my Indian dress, and left my men at the landing, about a mile and a half from the garrison. I paid my respects to him, and acquainted him with my situation. He told me he should be very happy to oblige me, but that it was impossible to pass the fort without proper credentials; and as I had them not, he desired me to return to the United States to prevent my goods being seized. Notwithstanding this friendly advice I was determined to run the risk, and to my extreme mortification they were all seized by the custom-house officers, by them deposited in the king's warehouse, and afterwards condemned.

In this distressed situation, and very ill in

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health, I went down in a king's boat to Cataraqui, where I arrived on the eighth of November and took up my abode at Mr. Howell's tavern. My indisposition increasing, I was obliged to keep to my blankets and had only one faithful squaw to attend me. In this miserable state I lay some time, expecting every hour to change my climate, though determined to use every endeavor to effect a recovery. At this interesting period my correspondent arrived from England, and notwithstanding the losses he had sustained by my imprudence, performed the part of a good Samaritan, pouring oil and wine into my wounds; and finding my disorder required medical assistance, desired a surgeon to attend me, and I was soon sufficiently recovered to pursue my journey to La Chine, where I remained some months in preparing the goods which he [had] brought from England for a Northwest journey among the Indians, intending to go next spring to Michilimackinac. *Mais la mauvaise fortune qui nous poursuivit toujours* frustrated all our schemes and obliged us to leave La Chine on the twenty-sixth of May, 1786, from whence we proceeded in a large Schenectady boat to Oswegatche, where we stopped a few hours and landed at a place called Toniata Creek, where I determined to apply for 500 acres of land as a Loyalist settler; which being granted me by Government, I immediately felled timber to build a house for the accommodation

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of Indians, in hopes of deriving considerable advantages by barter.

In a few days the Indians came to trade with us, which gave us encouragement and at the same time flattered us with the pleasing ideas of succeeding in commerce; but some affairs requiring my friend's attendance at Montreal, trade suffered a temporary suspense, and at his return he told me that we must leave our quarters for he was apprehensive of a seizure for an English debt.

In this cruel dilemma flight was our only security, and we embarked all our goods on board a large bateau and proceeded to Pimitiscotyan Landing upon Lake Ontario, where we entered a creek and found accommodation at a trader's house. The next morning we prepared a house for trade, and for some days went on successfully; but our happiness was of short duration, for an officer pursued us and took possession of all the effects he could find, even to the tent which sheltered us from the weather, and carried them down to Montreal, where they were sold for less than one-fourth part of their original cost and charges. Thus circumstanced, without any property to trade with, we came down to the Bay of Kenty and resided there ten months among the Loyalist settlers, whose hospitality tended to soften the rigor of distress and alleviate my sorrows. Early in spring, 1786, we crossed over to Carleton Island and from

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## John Long

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thence to Fort Oswego, intending to go into the United States by that post; but not having any pass, we were not allowed to pursue our journey. In this mortifying situation I advised my friend to adopt another plan, and procured a conveyance to Salmon Creek, about twenty miles from the fort. Here we rested one day, and with five pounds of pork and two loaves of bread we set off on foot, escorted by a squaw, expecting to reach Fort Stanwix in about four days; but the old path was entirely obliterated and we were obliged to return in the evening to the creek, disappointed in the attempt. Unwilling to make another effort, we agreed to return to Fort Oswego, and though the distance was not more than twenty miles, we were six days before we reached the garrison.

In this expedition my friend suffered great hardships; not being accustomed to sleep in the woods, and having also a knapsack with about thirty pounds' weight to carry, grieved him exceedingly. The shortness of provisions increased the distress, for it cannot be supposed that five pounds of pork and two loaves of bread would last three persons any length of time.

Previous to our journey's end we were twelve hours without any sustenance except wild onions; but fortunately we found on the sand about 140 birds' eggs, which we boiled and eagerly devoured, notwithstanding the

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greatest part had young birds in them, with small down on their bodies.

On our arrival at the fort the commanding officer rallied us on our attempt; and taking my friend aside, advised him either to return to Montreal or go up to Niagara, as he was sure he was not equal to the fatigue of an Indian life. He followed the officer's advice, and left me at the fort, which I soon afterwards quitted and went down to Montreal. From thence I got a conveyance to Quebec and being greatly distressed, applied to Lord Dorchester for relief, who generously directed his aide-de-camp to accompany me to Lieutenant-general Hope, and strongly recommended me to his notice, to be employed in an Indian capacity. Being in some measure relieved, and supplied with a few dollars and other necessaries, I was sent up to Cataraqui.

I left Quebec and arrived at Montreal on the fourteenth of July. The next day I pursued my journey on foot, but seeing two Indians of my acquaintance in a canoe and having some money in my pocket to buy rum, I hired them to convey me to Cataraqui, and in our way we killed plenty of game.

On the nineteenth of August I delivered my credentials to the proper officer, but he could not render me any service. However, he recommended me by letter to his friend at Carleton

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Island, where Sir John Johnson<sup>60</sup> was waiting for a vessel to convey him to Niagara to hold a council with the Indians. Fortunately I procured an interview with him and communicating to him my situation, he ordered me to be in readiness to assist as interpreter at his return. On the eighteenth of September Sir John Johnson met us at the head of the Bay of Kenty. The instant the Indians heard of his arrival they saluted him with a discharge of small arms and having received some rum, they danced and sang all night their war songs. One of them I particularly noticed, which was to the following effect:

“At last our good father is arrived. He has broken the small branches, and cleared his way to meet us. He has given us presents in abundance, and only demands this large bed (meaning a considerable tract of land which was described on a map).”

At twelve o'clock the next day a council was held and Sir John laid his map before them, desiring a tract of land from Toronto to Lake Huron. This the Indians agreed to grant him and the deed of gift being shown them, it was signed by the chiefs affixing the emblem, or

<sup>60</sup>This was the son of Sir William Johnson of New York. He succeeded to his father's rank and estates, and during the Revolution was an active leader of partisan forays against his native state. At the close of the war he removed to Canada and became Superintendent of Indian Affairs for British North America.

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figure of their respective totems, as their signatures.

Sir John Johnson then left them and embarked for Cataraqui, the capital of the Loyalist settlements.

Previous to his departure I made him more fully acquainted with my distressed situation and procured from him a temporary supply, which enabled me to go down to the third township in the Bay of Kenty, where I stayed with my Loyalist friends till the spring of 1787, during which time I had frequent opportunities of making observations on the flourishing state of the new settlements.

The settlements of the Loyalists in Canada bid fair to be a valuable acquisition to Great Britain; and in case of a war with the United States will be able to furnish not only some thousands of veteran troops, but a rising generation of a hardy race of men whose principles during the last war stimulated them to every exertion, even at the expense of their property, family, and friends, in support of the cause they so warmly espoused. There was, however, when I resided in the country, one cause of complaint, which, though it may not immediately affect the welfare and prosperity of the present inhabitants or prevent an increase of population in proportion to the unlocated lands, is big with impending danger, and which for the satisfaction of the public I shall endeavor to explain.

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## John Long

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All the land from Point au Baudet (the beginning of the Loyalist settlements on the River St. Lawrence) to the head of the Bay of Kenty, which at this period, I am informed, contains at least 10,000 souls, is said to be liable to the old feudal system of the French seigneuries, the lords of which claim title to receive some rent, or exercise some paramount right, which though it may be at present very insignificant, and which perhaps may never be insisted on, renders every man dependent on the lord of the manor, and in process of time, as land becomes more valuable, the raising these rents or the exercise of these rights, may occasion frequent disputes. I think, therefore, with submission to our government, that as many hundreds of Americans are now settled there, and doubtless many more may occasionally migrate from the United States, either from being disgusted with the polity of the country or from an idea of reaping greater benefits as subjects of Great Britain, it behooves us to remove every obstacle of subserviency, and either by purchase or any other mode Administration may think fit to adopt, render all the lands in Canada granted to Loyalist subjects, or others who have [taken] or may voluntarily take the oaths of allegiance, as free as those in Nova Scotia.

Men who have been engaged in their country's cause from the best of principles should have every possible indulgence; and in propor-



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tion as they have been deprived of comforts by the desolation of war, they should be recompensed without any partial restrictions, and the remainder of their days rendered as happy as the governments they live under can make them.

The population of these new settlements and their parallel situation with Fort Oswegatche, Carleton Island, Oswego, and Niagara evince, perhaps, more forcibly than ever the propriety of retaining these barriers in our possession, which in the former part of this work I have fully explained; and as the third township alone (which is nine miles square) contained in the year 1787 about 1700 inhabitants, it is difficult to say what number of valuable subjects that country may hereafter produce. Certain it is that it is capable of supporting multitudes, as the land is in general fertile and on an average produces about thirty bushels of wheat per acre, even in the imperfect manner in which it is cleared, leaving all the stumps about three feet high and from five to ten trees on an acre. This mode of clearing is in fact absolutely necessary, because new-cultivated lands in hot climates require shelter to prevent the scorching heat of the sun, which in its full power would burn up the seed. It has also been found expedient in stony ground to let the stones remain, as they retain a moisture favorable to vegetation.

In the month of May I left the new settlements and went down to Montreal and from

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## John Long

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thence to Quebec, where I waited on Lord Dorchester, but could not gain admittance. I was afterward informed that His Lordship was indisposed. I then went to Lieutenant-general Hope's, but he had embarked for England.

So many mortifying disappointments affected me very sensibly, but as my discouragements generally increased my exertions, I was more assiduous in my endeavors to live, and while I was contriving schemes for future support I received a supply from a friend. So seasonable a relief braced up all my nerves, and I felt a pleasure that can scarce be conceived by any but such as have experienced hardships and difficulties similar to mine.

My heart being cheered and every gloomy thought dispersed, I determined to leave the country whilst I had money in my pocket. Having found another friend to sign a pass, I went on board a ship then lying in the River St. Lawrence on the twenty-fifth of October, and arrived in London the beginning of December following, rejoiced at again setting foot on my native shore.

Having finished the historical part of my work, I have only to solicit the candid indulgence of the public for any literary errors I may have been guilty of; and with great respect to convey to them an humble hope that the *Voyages and Travels*, together with the vocabulary subjoined, may not be found totally unworthy of their attention.

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